

Root text: *RT page 1*

I pay homage to the eminent holy beings who are in essence inseparable from Guru Protector Manjushri. Here, in explaining the presentation of tenets, there are three outlines: 1. definition, 2. divisions, and 3. the meaning of each division.

1. Definition: The definition of a person who propounds Buddhist tenets is: a person propounding tenets who accepts the Three Jewels to be the final objects of refuge and who does not assert any objects of refuge other than them.

2. Divisions: There are four divisions of proponents of Buddhist tenets:

1. The Proponents of the Great Exposition (*Sanskrit: Vaibhasika*),
2. The Proponents of Sutra (*Skt. Sautrantika*),
3. The Proponents of Mind Only (*Skt. Cittamatra*) and
4. The Proponents of the Middle Way (*Skt. Madhyamika*).

The first two are also called ‘the two schools that propound [truly established external] objects’.

3. The meaning of each division: The explanation of the

1. Great Exposition School,
2. Sutra School,
3. Mind Only School and
4. Middle Way School.

Out of the many reasons for studying tenets, the key most important one is to understand the subtle meaning of dependent arising. As mentioned by Lama Tsongkhapa's *Three Principal Aspects of the Path*:

The Reason to Meditate on the Right View:

Without the wisdom realizing ultimate reality, even though you have generated renunciation and the mind of enlightenment you cannot cut the root cause of circling. Therefore, attempt the method to realize dependent arising.

Therefore, as Lama Tsongkhapa says here, without understanding the very important subtle meaning of dependent arising, one cannot cut the root of one's suffering, samsara.

In the study of tenets, one will be looking at the assertions of the four Buddhist tenets, all of which have their own presentations of selflessness.

As one progresses up the hierarchy, one will come to understand how the explanations of selflessness become increasingly subtle. It is only through such a process that one will appreciate the subtlety of the highest school as one has avenues for comparison.

What is tenet: *Cutting Through Appearance* *CTA page 150*

The word for tenet in Tibetan is *drub tha*: *established conclusion*, which comprises two syllabus, *drub*: *established* and *tha*: *conclusion*.

Therefore, here, '*drub/ established*' means that *it is a thesis that is decided upon and established in reliance upon scripture and/ or reasoning from the perspective of one's mind*.

This is a decision that is arrived at by depending on scripture and/ or reasoning. Even though from one's own perspective such a decision is correct, nevertheless, this does not mean that this is true in reality.

'*tha/ conclusion*' in literal Tibetan means '*limit/ reached the end*'. Here, it means *conclusion: that is, for one, one thinks that "This is it! I have concluded that it is like that and nothing else! [I will not forsake this conclusion for something else!]"*

Therefore, **tenet is a thesis that is decided upon and established in reliance upon scripture and/ or reasoning and, from the perspective of one's mind, will not be forsaken for something else.**

The two types of persons: *CTA page 149*

Those whose minds have not been affected by tenets:	Those whose minds have been affected by tenets:
People who only seek the pleasures of this life, who are not interested about what past and future life or reality is, neither are they concerned with thinking too much, nor investigating and analyzing them.	People who are not just interested about the affairs and happiness of this life, but take interests and efforts to investigate and analyze the basis/ nature of reality. Through such efforts, they arrive at their own conclusion on what reality is all about. Based on their own conclusions, they live their lives according to those principles, abandoning certain activities/ ways of thoughts and cultivating other activities/ ways of thoughts.

The two divisions [schools] of tenets: *CTA page 150*

Non-Buddhist (Outsider)	Buddhist (Insider)
[Mere] non-Buddhist (Outsider): One who does not have faith in the Three Jewels	[Mere] Buddhist (Insider): One who accepts the Three Jewels as the final objects of refuge and has faith in their abilities to protect from the sufferings of both the lower realms and cyclic existence.

One normally thinks that Buddhism in general is the best [among all religions] and oneself being a Buddhist in particular is the best that one can do in life. However, merely thinking that being a Buddhist is the best, is not helpful nor sufficient.
To really get the benefit of being a Buddhist, one should have an object of comparison. Here, one is comparing with the outsiders/ non-Buddhists.
To really know the special features of Buddhist teachings and why it is so special to be a Buddhist, one necessarily needs to understand the views and beliefs of non-Buddhists.
On such a basis, then one will be able to make a comparison to the views as taught in Buddhist teachings.
When one realizes the immense differences between them, one will really appreciate how wonderful it is to be a Buddhist. Through such an understanding of the views of the non-Buddhists, this will really make an immense difference to one's mind.
Buddhist (Insider) proponent (school) of tenets: possesses three distinguishing characteristics: <small>CTA page 152</small> 1) Teacher – they have a teacher who has extinguished all faults and completed all good qualities. 2) Teachings – their teachings are not harmful to any sentient being. 3) View – they assert the view that the self is empty of being permanent, unitary and independent.
Another way to define a Buddhist (Insider) proponent (school) of tenets: one who asserts the <i>four seals</i> (as uttered by Buddha before passing into parinirvana): <small>CTA page 176</small> 1) All compounded phenomena are impermanent. 2) All contaminated things are miserable. 3) All phenomena are selfless. 4) Nirvana is peace.
Therefore, one who accepts these four seals is a proponent of Buddhist tenets and one who does not assert them is not.
In essence: A Buddhist [an Insider] is one who accepts the Three Jewels, whereas a Proponent of Buddhist tenets [a proponent of Insider tenets] is one who, on the basis of accepting the Three Jewels as objects of refuge, accepts the four seals.

Detailed explanations of the Four Seals: CTA page 176

1) All compounded phenomena are impermanent: As the word 'composed' indicates, it is the very characteristic of the phenomenon, whose existence comes into being in dependence on the coming together of various causes and conditions. Due to this, the phenomenon is subjected to change.
This statement has profound implication: if the causes and conditions for the coming together of any phenomenon do not gather, then this particular phenomenon will not arise.
Likewise, for the phenomenon to go out of existence, the causes and conditions for its destruction/ going out of existence must also gather, without which, that phenomenon will continue to exist.
The word 'impermanent' indicates that compounded phenomena undergo <i>momentary change</i> at each single moment of time.
2) All contaminated things are miserable: phenomena can be divided into contaminated and uncontaminated. 'Contaminated' here, refers to the <i>afflictions</i> . Therefore, a contaminated phenomenon is a <i>phenomenon that is under the influence of the afflictions</i> . Such a contaminated phenomenon is miserable.
Uncontaminated phenomena are, on the other hand, not suffering/ not miserable.
The most important question for oneself to analyze should be this: can contaminated phenomena, which are sufferings, be eliminated? This brings one to the third seal:
3) All phenomena are selfless: As long as a phenomenon arises through the influence of the afflictions, it is miserable. When one checks [and relates] to one's suffering, to see whether such miserable phenomena can be eliminated or not, one can trace the causes of such miserable [experiences] back to one's anger and attachment. These, in turn, arise from an apprehension of a 'self'.
To check whether such an apprehension of a 'self' can be eliminated or not, there are two factors to consider: a) Does the 'self', that is apprehended by one's erroneous mind, exists or not? b) Is there an 'antidote' to such an apprehension of a 'self'?
Through the [correct] process of thinking and analysis, one should realize that an apprehension of a 'self' is an erroneous way of apprehension.
Such an apprehension/ mind is a wrong consciousness, which is a <i>knower that engages in its object erroneously</i> .
Therefore, through analysis, one can come to understand that an apprehension of a 'self' is a wrong consciousness, due to it engaging in its object erroneously.
This is because, while in reality, such a 'self' does not exist, this <i>apprehension of a 'self'</i> believes that such a 'self' exists.

Since such an apprehension is a wrong consciousness in reality, therefore, there must be another mind whose mode of apprehension is the complete opposite of such an apprehension.
Such a mind is the <i>wisdom that realizes selflessness</i> , which is a valid mind/ [valid cognizer].
It is a valid mind because, this <i>wisdom realizing selflessness</i> realizes that there is no such 'self' in reality.
The definition of a valid cognizer [in the context of the lower schools of tenets], is <i>a new and incontrovertible knower</i> .
This mind is the opposite of a wrong consciousness, which apprehends non-existents to exist. Whereas a valid cognizer apprehends whatever that exists in reality to exist as it is.
Therefore, a valid cognizer is the opposite of a wrong consciousness and thus, is a correct and factually concordant mind.
There are thus these two minds: a) an apprehension of a 'self', a wrong consciousness apprehending its object erroneously, and b) the wisdom realizing selflessness.
A wrong consciousness such as this <i>apprehension of a 'self'</i> does not have the support of a valid cognizer, does not have <i>truth</i> on its side. Due to this, it is not stable [therefore, it is changeable].
Inversely, the wisdom realizing selflessness, being a factually concordant mind, apprehends phenomena exactly in the way it exist in reality/ in accord with reality. Such a mind can be substantiated by facts, therefore, it is the truth.
On one hand, there is a wrong consciousness, which perverts the apprehension of reality, and on the other, there is the wisdom that realizes the truth as it is.
The manner that the <i>wisdom realizing selflessness apprehends its object</i> is the complete opposite to the manner that the <i>apprehension of a 'self' apprehends its object</i> .
Such a valid cognizer, since it has validity and the truth on its side, can harm and destroy that wrong consciousness. Therefore, this shows that the wisdom realizing selflessness can harm the apprehension of a 'self'.
The more one becomes accustomed to the understanding of selflessness, the more one's ego-grasping/ apprehension of a 'self' becomes weaker over time.
Therefore, this is the question one has to gain ascertainment at: whether the cultivation of wisdom realizing selflessness will gradually weaken the apprehension of a 'self' or not.
If that is the case, then logically as well, one can also establish that, with increased familiarization and power of the wisdom realizing selflessness, one will be able to completely eradicate this apprehension of the 'self' eventually.
This is the reason why “All phenomena are selfless” is taught immediately after teaching that “All contaminated things are miserable.”
If there are no solutions to the problem, then it would be pointless and disturbing to merely focus on how contaminated things [oneself and others] are miserable.
Since precisely because there is a solution, the second seal's 'contaminated things are miserable' is taught. This solution is shown as the third seal: All phenomena are selfless.
As mentioned before, all of one's unhappiness originate from anger and/ or attachment. These two always arise from within a very strong sense of a 'self/ I/ me'.
While one has such an apprehension of 'self/ ego-grasping, but when one analyzes deeply, one can conclude that such a sense of 'self' that is apprehended by one's [bewildered] mind does not exist whatsoever.
When one is able to develop a wisdom that sees [through] this 'self' that is apprehended by one's [bewildered] mind does not exist whatsoever, then one will be able to oppose this ego-grasping.
When one reduces one's ego-grasping and eventually eliminates it [altogether], one will overcome all of one's problems and sufferings.
This is evidently clear, from within one's own experiences, all of one's problems and unhappiness arise from erroneous ways of relating to reality/ things and events.
Of all the numberless wrong conceptions or erroneous ways one conceives of oneself and the world around one, the very chief of such wrong conceptions is this very strong belief in/ apprehension of 'self'.
Through thinking and analysis, one will gradually come to realize that one's apprehension of a 'self' is the root source of all other misconceptions, which leads one into sufferings and problems.
However, when one is able to eradicate such an apprehension of 'self', and since it is the root of all of one's problems and sufferings, then sufferings and problems will not arise anymore. In their place, one will have a peaceful state/ nirvana instead.
Since all phenomena are empty, therefore: 4) Nirvana is peace.
When one destroys one's root problem, the apprehension of 'self', right there and then, there is liberation from all sufferings.

Therefore, nirvana is not established from outside [of oneself], it is realized right within the basis of one's mind.
In due course, when one eradicates one's ego-grasping, the root of all one's problems from within one's mind, there and then nirvana is attained.
In the absence of ego-grasping, which means there are no more problems and sufferings, this obviously means that there will only be peace.
The ' <i>selfless</i> ' in 'phenomena are selfless' means, that it is absent of a particular 'self'. The ' <i>self</i> ' here [in ' <i>selfless</i> '] is accepted by all Buddhist tenets. The ' <i>self</i> ' refers to a permanent, unitary and independent 'self'.
Therefore, all Buddhist tenets accept that such a 'self', that is permanent, unitary and independent, does not exist whatsoever.

Brief explanation of non-Buddhist assertions of the permanent, unitary and independent 'self':

Most non-Buddhist tenets assert that there is a permanent, unitary and independent 'self'/ 'soul'. All Buddhist tenets are unanimous in asserting that such a soul /'self' does not exist whatsoever.
These non-Buddhist tenet systems are not asserting such a 'self' without intellectual analysis nor asserting it with mere belief. They do have their own reasons for such a conclusion.
Among them, there are some systems which also assert reincarnation [like the Buddhist tenets]. Therefore, they also assert something that transmigrates from life to life.
Obviously, they would not assert that it is the body that transmigrates, as this is very clear that it is left behind.
Therefore, they acquired the concept that the phenomenon that transmigrates from life to life, a 'self/ soul', must be something that is independent from/ completely non-dependent on/ unrelated to the body.
They assert that, while such a soul is independent from the body, it itself is also unchanging in the sense of being the same 'soul' that transmigrates from life to life. Therefore, they assert the 'self' as permanent in the sense of not changing.
Likewise, they assert the 'self' as unitary/ single, in the sense of not being constituted by parts and therefore, is partless.
Therefore, this 'self' is a) permanent/ unchanging, b) unitary/ partless and also c) independent of all causes and conditions/ uncaused.
The reason that these non-Buddhist systems assert a 'self' that is unrelated to the body is this: they do not know how to posit a self that is of the <i>same entity with the body</i> . Therefore, they assert the 'self' has to be permanent, unitary and independent.

How Buddha's turning of the three Dharma Wheels evolved into the four Buddhist tenets: CTA page 171

The existence of such a 'self' is refuted by all Buddhist tenets, who accept the Three Jewels as ultimate objects of refuge and assert the four seals as taught by Buddha.
The four proponents of Buddhist tenets are the proponents of Great Exposition, Sutra, Mind Only and Middle Way. These four divisions are exhaustive. <small>(CTA 174)</small>
The evolution of these systems is related to the three turnings of the Wheel of Dharma as taught by Buddha.
Proponents of Buddhist tenets can also be divided into Proponents Hinayana tenets and Proponents of Mahayana tenets.
In the first turning, Buddha taught that all phenomena are <i>truly existent/ truly established</i> . These teachings are found within the Great Exposition School and the Sutra School, which are Proponents of Hinayana tenets.
The main intended trainees/ disciples of the first turning are those propounding Hinayana tenets, that is, for those following the Great Exposition and Sutra Schools.
Therefore, Buddha taught [in the first turning] to fit the dispositions of these trainees.
In the second turning, Buddha taught that all phenomena are <i>not truly existent/ not truly established</i> .
The intended recipients/ trainees of this turning are those followers of the Middle Way School, which propounds Mahayana tenets.
In the third turning, Buddha differentiated between what is truly established and what is not: <i>Thoroughly established natures and Other-powered natures are truly established/ truly existent</i> , whereas the <i>Imputational natures are not truly established/ not truly existent</i> .
The main intended trainees/ disciples of this third turning are the followers of Mind Only School, [which also propounds Mahayana tenets].
Therefore, it is a most likely situation that the followers of these four Buddhist tenet systems already existed during these three turnings [at the time of the Buddha].
<i>This module will place emphasis on the presentations of the views of selflessness and, paths and grounds of the four Buddhist tenet systems. As such, there will be less emphasis on the presentations of objects and object possessors of these four schools.</i>

Seven outlines of the Great Exposition School: RT page 2

The explanation of the Great Exposition School (*Skt. Vaibhasika*) has seven outlines:

1. definition,
2. divisions,
3. etymology,
4. way of asserting objects,
5. way of asserting object-possessors,
6. way of asserting selflessness and
7. presentation of the grounds and paths.

1. Definition: The definition of a Proponent of the Great Exposition is: a person propounding Lesser Vehicle (*Skt. Hinayana*) tenets who does not assert self-cognizers but does assert truly established external objects.

Detailed explanations of the definition:

Proponents of the Great Exposition do not assert self-cognizers/ self-knowers. However, proponents of the Sutra and Mind Only School do assert self-knowers.

What are self-knowers and other-knowers:

Consciousnesses/ minds can be analyzed in terms of other-knowers and self-knowers:

For those who assert self-knowers, within a single collection of consciousness, which is clear and knowing, there is a part of the consciousness that knows an object other than itself (other-knower) while there is another part of the consciousness that knows itself (self-knower). Self-knower is defined as *that which is an aspect of the apprehender*.

For example, an eye consciousness apprehending blue: within a single collection of this mind, there is a part of it that is aware/ knows itself, which is the self-knower. There is also another part of this same mind to which the object 'blue' is appearing clearly and to which this eye consciousness is cognizant of. This part of the mind is called the other-knower.

Nevertheless, proponents of the Great Exposition do not assert self-knowers. They do not accept that the consciousness has the ability to see itself clearly, to be able to apprehend itself.

In essence, proponents of the Great Exposition assert that consciousnesses are only *other-knowers*. They assert that consciousnesses do not have the abilities to look at themselves clearly.

What is an external object: The proponent of the Great Exposition also assert truly established external objects: An external object is a coarse object that is formed through the aggregations of subtle atoms and particles. These form a coarse object which is then suitable to be apprehended by a sense power, which becomes a condition for the production a sense consciousness that apprehends the coarse object.

Therefore, they assert that an external object has to exist before the consciousness apprehending it can be generated.

Therefore, the proponents of the Great Exposition assert external objects to exist, above that, they assert external objects to be truly established.

What is 'truly established' (*den par grub pa*) : They assert objects to be truly established because, anything that exists has a substance [substantial entity] right there independently. Its existence has nothing to do with the mind imputing it.

This is because, they cannot explain how the mind can have a role in the existence of an object. Therefore, all external phenomena have an independent substance [substantial entity] right there, therefore, things are truly established.

They are unable to posit that it is the characteristic of phenomena that [can exist by being] *imputed by consciousness*. For them, if something has to exist, it must be truly established/ substantially established in the sense of being a substance/ basis right there independently.

In essence, if someone 1) does not assert self-cognizers, but 2) asserts truly established external objects and is 3) a proponent of Hinayana tenets, this make such a person a proponent of the Great Exposition School.

Divisions and etymology of the proponents of Great Exposition: RT page 2

2. Divisions -There are three divisions: (made mainly due to geographical locations) –

1. Proponents of the Great Exposition from Kashmir,
2. Proponents of the Great Exposition from the Western Region (*Skt. Aparantakas*) and
3. Proponents of the Great Exposition from the Central Region (*Skt. Magadhas*).

3. Etymology – Why are they called ‘Proponents of Particulars’?

They are called such because they propound tenets through following [Vasumitra’s] Great Exposition of Particulars (*Skt. Mahavibhasa*) or, alternatively, they are called Proponents of Particulars because they propound the three times to be particulars [i.e., instances] of substances.

Elaborations on the Etymology:

There is a set of teachings called ' <i>Seven Treatises of Knowledge</i> ', composed mainly by the Arhats Shariputra and Mudgalyayana. These teachings are not the actual speech of Buddha but are teachings composed by his chief disciples.
Nevertheless, the proponents of the Great Exposition take these teachings to be the words of Buddha.
Vasumitra's <i>Great Exposition of Particulars</i> is essentially a commentary on the <i>Seven Treatises of Knowledge</i> . The formal comprises one hundred thousand verses.
Later, Vasubandhu condensed the essential meanings/ points of the <i>Great Exposition of Particulars</i> , and composed the <i>Treasury of Knowledge (Abhidharmakośa)</i> .
One of the reasons the followers of the Great Exposition are called 'Proponents of Particulars' is because they follow the Great Exposition of Particulars.
Another reason they are called such is because they assert the three times to be [instances of substantial entities]:
Composed phenomena have the factors of: Production, abiding and disintegration. For them, these factors are related to the three times, which are particulars/ instances of [substantial entities].
What 'instances of substantial entities' mean: For example: a golden cup is essentially made of gold, which can be melted and shaped into a plate, which can again be melted and shaped into a statue.
Therefore, as the golden cup becomes golden plate, its entity/ nature has changed from being a cup into being a plate. Again, when it becomes a statue, its entity/ nature has also changed from being a plate to being a statue.
However, while these changes take place, its substantial entity/ substance of being gold has not changed.
What 'three times to be instances of substantial entities' mean:
Take another example, the three times of a sprout: a past sprout, a present sprout and a future sprout. The sprout has changed in the course of these three times, each is not the other. Even though that is the case, a past sprout, a present sprout and a future sprout is nevertheless a sprout, the substantial entity of it being a sprout has not changed.
1) A future sprout is posited at the time of the seed [and thus exists at the time of the seed].
2) When the seed germinates, a [present] sprout arises.
3) When the [present] sprout matures and becomes a tree which bears fruit, the [present] sprout ceases to exist and thus becomes [and exists as] a past sprout, as at the time of the fruit there is no more [present] sprout.
Even though the <i>entity or nature</i> of the sprout has changed, its <i>substantial entity [existence/ generality]</i> as a sprout has not.
Therefore, for the proponents of Great Exposition, the <i>substance [substantial entity]</i> of a sprout <i>exists</i> in all three times.
Take another example of a young girl: one can say that she is a <i>future mother</i> . In the future, she becomes a [<i>present</i>] <i>mother</i> when she conceives. When she passes away, she becomes a <i>past mother</i> .
Just like the substance/ [substantial entity] of a sprout which exists in the past, present and future, likewise, the substantial entity of a mother exists in the past, present and future as well.
Therefore, one who propounds the three times to be <i>particulars of substance/[substantial entity]</i> is a proponent of Particulars.

Assertions of objects: RT page 2

4. Way of asserting objects – The definition of thing is: that which is able to perform a function. Thing, existent, and object of knowledge are equivalent (mutually inclusive).
The Sutra School and the schools above it do not assert 'things' in the same way as asserted by the Great Exposition.
There are two [divisions] of things: 1. permanent things and 2. impermanent things. 1. Examples of permanent things are uncompounded space, analytical cessations, and non-analytical cessations. 2. Examples of impermanent things are created phenomena, products, and impermanent phenomena.
Another way of dividing things is into: 1. conventional truths and 2. ultimate truths. 1. The definition of a conventional truth is: <i>a phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is cancelled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its individual parts.</i> Illustrations [of conventional truths] are, for example, a vase and a woollen cloth, because if a vase is broken with a hammer, the mind apprehending it is cancelled, and if a woollen cloth is separated into its individual threads, the mind apprehending it is cancelled.
What is Conventional truth: According to this school, a vase is an illustration of conventional truth. This is because, if the vase is broken up with a hammer, the valid cognizer apprehending vase ceases to exist.
When one conceives a vase, one is essentially doing so in terms of its <i>shape</i> . Therefore, if it is broken up, the shape that makes it a vase is no more. Therefore, the mind which conceives of it as a vase is cancelled/ ceases.

Here, a vase is <i>conventional</i> (Tib. Kundzob), this is because its existence depends on the aggregation of many factors.
When these come together, a [causally concordant] phenomenon comes into being. Since that is the case, it is therefore <i>established</i> and a <i>truth</i> . For this reason, a vase is a conventional truth.
Take another subtler example, a water in a cup: according to the Buddhist presentation of atomic/ physical reality, water is essentially an aggregation of eight different particles – particles of earth, water, fire and wind; together with form, smell, taste and touch. Therefore, water is an aggregation of these eight particles [elements].
If one were to individually isolate these particles, [conceptually] removing its smell, taste, tactility and so on, at the end, one will find there is no water left. That is, the mind apprehending water [as a conventional truth] is cancelled.
Therefore, be it a [physical] cup destroyed by a hammer or one's mental isolation of the eight particles constituting water, the mind apprehending cup or water will cease to exist.
Here, conventional truth is synonymous with: conventionally existent, conventionally established and imputedly existent.
2. The definition of an ultimate truth is: <i>a phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is not cancelled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its individual parts.</i> Illustrations [of ultimate truths] are, for example, directionally partless particles, temporally partless [moments of] consciousness, and un compounded phenomena.
What an Ultimate truth is, using the example of directionally partless particles: According to this school, they assert <i>directionally partless particles</i> , which essentially refer to the smallest [indivisible] evolute of form, which is the basic building block of matter.
Such particles are directionally partless, and is an ultimate truth.
As it is the smallest possible form, it cannot be [physically] destroyed, nor can one even conceptually break it down further into smaller forms. It is autonomous by itself without the need to depend on anything else.
Since it does not depend on other factors, it is not conventional, thus for them, it is not a conventional truth but an ultimate truth.
Likewise, for consciousness, there are also temporally partless moments of consciousness: the consciousness [existing within] the smallest moment of time is also an ultimate truth, [as it cannot be mentally broken down further into smaller moments of consciousnesses].
What is un compounded space: This is an illustration of an ultimate truth. This is because, un compounded space is permanent, not undergoing change, due to [it being never destroyed], it fits into the definition of being an ultimate truth.
Since un compounded space does not undergo change, then perhaps the valid cognizer apprehending un compounded space will not undergo change as well. Since that is the case, the mind apprehending it is not cancelled, thus fitting the definition.
Here, ultimate truth is synonymous with: ultimately existent, ultimately established, substantially existent, truly existent (den par yod pa).
The difference between established base and ultimate truth: here, if it is an <i>established base</i> , it is necessarily an <i>existent, substantially established, [phenomena, object, thing, object of knowledge, truly established, substantial entity, substance.]</i>
However, whatever is an <i>established base/ substantially established/ truly established</i> , is not necessarily <i>substantially existent/ ultimately established/ ultimately existent</i> , [the latter group being <i>ultimate truths</i>].
In general, substantially established and substantially existent mean the same. However, in this school, one is analyzing the divisions of established base/ phenomena. They do not assert these two to be the same [the former being an established base while the latter is an ultimate truth.] <small>See next page</small>

Difference between the group: “Hinayanist and Mahayanist” and “proponents of Hinayana and Mahayana tenets”:

Whether a person has entered the Hinayana Vehicle (Lesser Vehicle) or Mahayana Vehicle (Great Vehicle), in either case, that person has entered a vehicle.
The difference between the vehicles depends essentially on whether this person has bodhicitta in his mind or not. Therefore, it is differentiated in dependence on the vastness/ scale of the motivation of the mind.
One who has bodhicitta is one who has entered the Mahayana vehicle, called a Mahayanist; one who does not [but has entered a vehicle] has entered the Hinayana Vehicle, called a Hinayanist.
The question then is this: is a Hinayanist and a Mahayanist the same as a proponent of Hinayana tenets and a proponent of Mahayana tenets respectively?
Proponents of the Great Exposition and Sutra Schools are proponents of Hinayana tenets, whereas proponents of Mind Only and Middle Way Schools are proponents of Mahayana tenets.

Illustration of someone who is a Mahayanist but a proponent of Hinayana tenets: Is there a proponent of the Great Exposition School that has entered the Mahayana Vehicle? There is no reason why there cannot be.
There can be someone who is a proponent of the Great Exposition, a Hinayana tenet, who has entered the Mahayana Vehicle.
Illustration of someone who is a Hinayanist but a proponent of Mahayana tenets: There can also be Hearer Arhats who are proponents of Mind Only or Middle Way Schools.
Since these are the cases, therefore, a Hinayanist is not necessarily a proponent of Hinayana tenets; likewise, a Mahayanist is also not necessarily a proponent of Mahayana tenets.

Difference between a 'Hinayana tenet' and a 'Mahayana tenet':

Can the assertions and non-assertions of truly existent objects and self-knowers become the defining characteristics of a Hinayana tenet?
[CTA page 127: A distinction is made between <i>philosophical schools</i> , which are divided into Lesser Vehicle and Great Vehicle, and <i>practitioners of paths</i> , which also are divided into Lesser Vehicle and Great Vehicle. The <i>philosophical schools</i> are divided in this way in accordance with whether they present a <i>selflessness of phenomena</i> (Great Vehicle) or whether they do not (Lesser Vehicle).]

General and specific relationships of 'Established' and 'Existence':

In general/ [the generalities of] 'established' and 'existence' are synonymous, especially from the perspective of the highest school. However, when these terms are affixed to ' <i>substantial</i> ' in the Great Exposition school, then substantially established and substantially existent do not mean the same.	
For them, the phrase term ' <i>truly established</i> ' (<i>den par grub pa</i>) and ' <i>truly existence</i> ' (<i>den par yod pa</i>) has to be differentiated:	
Object, thing, existent, phenomenon, object of knowledge, truly established, substantially established, established base, substantial entity, substance, established by way of its own character, inherent existence, existence from its own side.	
Conventional truth, conventionally existent, conventionally established and imputedly existent, false, falsely existent.	Ultimate truth, ultimately existent, ultimately established, substantially existent, true, truly existent.

Lesson 4

28 February 2013

Existent and permanent things:

In general, to know whether something exists or not, that object is necessarily suitable to be <i>realized by a valid cognizer</i> .
This is how an <i>object</i> is certified/ verified as an <i>existent</i> .
According to the Great Exposition School, existent is divided into two: permanent things and impermanent things.
It is only the proponents of the Great Exposition that assert permanent <i>things</i> . All other Buddhist tenets do not assert that permanent phenomena are <i>things</i> .
The Great Exposition assert <i>things</i> in the same manner as all other Buddhist tenets: <i>that which is able to perform a function</i> .
However, proponents of the Great Exposition go further to assert that permanent things can perform functions as well.
Examples of permanent things are uncompounded space, analytical cessations, and non-analytical cessations.
Uncompounded space is permanent because it does not undergo momentary change, thus it is permanent.
According to them, it is also a <i>thing</i> , because it is able to perform the function of allowing movement to occur within it.
Analytical cessations are permanent cessations/ abandonment of any afflictions through the force of the wisdom directly realizing selflessness.
They also assert analytical cessations to be a thing, able to perform the function of stopping/ ceasing the afflictions. Once the affliction is abandoned, it is prevented from ever occurring again.
Non-analytical cessations are also factors of abandonment/ cessations. However, these abandonments do not occur through the force of [the ultimate antidote of the wisdom realizing selflessness], rather, these occur through the temporal absence of the conditions for the production of the phenomena.
For example: the horns of a goat will not grow on the head of a human. This is because, there is the absence of the causes for their production. This is not due to the force of an antidote that ensures its complete non-production, but merely because, for now, there is an absence of the causes for its production on human heads.
Such a factor of non-production of the goat's horns on human heads is asserted to be a non-analytical cessation.

Another example of a non-analytical cessation: temporal abandonment/ cessation of afflictions due to attaining the concentrations of the form and formless realms through cultivating the [mundane path bearing aspects of calmness of higher realms and coarseness of the realms below it].

When one's mind attains the respective concentrations of these realms, one has abandoned the afflictions temporarily.

Such temporal abandonments of afflictions is not due to the force of the [ultimate] antidote [of the wisdom realizing selflessness], but merely due to an absence of the conditions for the afflictions to manifest.

Comparisons of the four schools on what is 'substantially established':

According to the proponents of the Great Exposition, all phenomena are substantially established, whatever that exist are necessarily substantially established.	
This is because, they assert a substance/ substantial entity from the side of the object. Without such a substantially established phenomenon/ established base, objects cannot exist.	
The proponents of Sutra, Mind Only and Autonomy Middle Way Schools <i>do not assert that all phenomena</i> to be <i>substantially established</i> .	
This is because, they assert that substantially established phenomenon must only be a composed/ impermanent phenomenon.	
This is [a subtler assertion compared to the] Great Exposition School, where everything is substantially established.	
Moreover, the Consequent Middle Way School has the subtlest assertion: All phenomena [whether they are permanent or impermanent] are not substantially established.	
Summary:	Substantially established:
Great Exposition School	All phenomena – both permanent and impermanent
Sutra, Mind Only and Autonomy Middle Way Schools	Only impermanent phenomena
Consequent Middle Way School	No phenomena

Stating the case for imputed existence:

For this school, another way to divide existent is into *conventional truth and ultimate truth*.

The definition of a conventional truth, according to Vasubandhu's *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge (Skt. Abhidharmakosa)*, is: a phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is cancelled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its individual parts.

An illustration of a conventional truth is a vase. It is made up of many causes and conditions coming together, when these gather, a vase is established.

However, if the vase is destroyed, then the valid cognizer apprehending the vase ceases to exist. Therefore, this shows that the vase is not an enduring phenomenon. In this sense, it is therefore not an ultimate, not real, not the *truth*.

Since this is the case, the vase is an *imputed existent*, as its existence is *due to the gathering of causes and conditions*. It also has to be something that is flat-based, bulbous and performs the function of holding liquid.

Therefore, whether one calls it a conventional truth or imputed existence, it means the same, according to this school.

There are many examples given in the text to illustrate conventional truth according to this school.

One of it is a 'mala' comprising 108 beads: it is only when all the beads are strung together that there would be a mind apprehending 'mala'/ rosary.

However, when one removes each one of them, towards the end, one would merely be left with the string. Therefore, the mind apprehending the rosary would be cancelled.

Another example is 'a forest': one does not call a lone tree a 'forest'. However, when many trees are located together in a geographic location, one would then call it a 'forest'.

Likewise, an army is made up of many soldiers. One does not call a lone soldier an 'army'.

When one conceptually eliminates the trees or the soldiers, at the end, what is left is no longer a forest nor an army. The mind apprehending forest or army does not exist anymore.

Stating the case for ultimate existence:

Any other phenomena whose mode of existence is different from the definition of a conventional truth would then be an ultimate truth, as stated by *root text page 3* –

The *Treasury of Manifest Knowledge (Skt. Abhidharmakosa)*: “Those things, such as a pot or water, that the mind cannot engage if they are broken or mentally separated into other [things] exist as conventional [truths]. *Others exist as ultimate [truths].*”

An illustration of an ultimate truth is, a directionally partless particle: according to this school, the smallest particle is directionally partless in that, it is not possible to break it down further, thus being called partless and without any sectors.

Since that is the case, it is indestructible, therefore, it is real.

Since it will always exist, then it is necessarily apprehended by a valid cognizer. Therefore, the mind apprehending it can never be cancelled in any way. Since it fits the definition, it is an ultimate truth.

As oppose to an imputed existent, an ultimate truth, according to this school, is the same as substantially existent.

Other examples of ultimate truths are temporally partless moments of consciousness, and uncompounded space. The reasons for them being ultimate truths are similar to the explanations given.

Uncompounded space: It is permanent in the sense of never undergoing change, therefore, it is always present. Since that is the case, being stable, there will always be a mind apprehending uncompounded space. Such a mind can never be cancelled.

Since that is the case, it is the truth, real and true.

A permanent phenomenon is necessarily an ultimate truth, whereas an impermanent phenomenon can be either an ultimate truth or a conventional truth:

1) Are directionally partless particle impermanent or permanent?

The time it takes [for a healthy person] to snap a finger [is asserted by this school] to be divided into 120 parts. A single part is the smallest unit of time.

This smallest unit of time is an ultimate truth, any other units that are greater than this unit is a conventional truth.

[Therefore, even though the smallest unit of time is an ultimate truth, it is still undergoing momentary change, as this specific unit does not last longer than its time, it is impermanent. This shows that there are impermanent phenomena that are ultimate truths.]

[Whereas for any permanent phenomenon, since the mind apprehending it never ceases, it is necessarily an ultimate truth.]

Even though a generality pervades its instances, however, a generality is not necessarily its instances:

2) One way to divide an existence is into conventional and ultimate truths. However, if it is an existent, is it necessarily one these two truths?

[Not necessarily. This is because, if an existent is an ultimate truth, then it follows that it is also a conventional truth.]

[If that is the case, then this would incur two fallacies: a) There would be a common locus between an ultimate truth and a conventional truth, or, b) an existent would be both an ultimate truth and a conventional truth.]

A person, its aggregates and omnipresent mental factors as generalities and instances:

3a) Is a person a conventional truth/ imputedly existent or an ultimate truth/ substantially existent?

3b) Likewise, are the five omnipresent mental factors and the five aggregates conventional or ultimate truths?

If one asserts that the person is an imputed existent, then likewise, one would have to assert that the five aggregates/ consciousnesses are imputed existents.

Is the consciousness not an ultimate truth? Isn't the smallest moment of consciousness an ultimate truth?

According to this school, is consciousness an ultimate truth or a conventional truth? No matter what it is, the person/ consciousness can never cease to exist/ be destroyed, therefore, the mind apprehending consciousness or a person can never be cancelled.

Since that is the case, would this not make a person/ consciousness an ultimate truth as it fulfills the definition?

Can the aggregate of form cease to exist? Isn't the directionally partless particle a form?

All composed phenomena are included in the five aggregates. Since that is the case, then the directionally partless particle would have to be one of the five aggregates, included in the aggregate of form. Therefore, a form is not just a physical form that one possesses.

Since that is the case, would that not make the aggregate of form an ultimate truth?

It seems that one has to say that a person/ five aggregates are substantially existents/ ultimate truths. This is because the mind apprehending a person can never be cancelled.

For this school, the essential difference between a conventional truth and an ultimate truth lies in whether the mind apprehending its object <i>can</i> or <i>cannot</i> be cancelled.
The mind apprehending a directionally partless particle can never be cancelled. This is because it is the smallest matter which can never be destroyed by anything. Since it cannot be destroyed, then the mind apprehending it also cannot be cancelled.
Therefore, this makes the directionally partless particle an ultimate truth.
Based on such an understanding, if one were to be asked: “Is a person imputedly existent or substantially existent?”
The person is imputed in dependence upon any of the five aggregates. A person transmigrates from life to life, going in between higher and lower rebirths, achieves liberation and enlightenment, therefore, there will never be a time that a person ceases to exist.
Since that is the case, doesn't one then have to say that the person, and likewise the main minds and the omnipresent mental factors as well, have to be substantially existent?
Another question: For this school, is water an ultimate truth or a conventional truth? <i>Conventional truth.</i>
Since that is the case, how does one understand that water is a conventional truth and yet persons, aggregates and consciousnesses are ultimate truths?

Divisions of Impermanent things:

For this school, impermanent things are also divided into matter, consciousness and non-associated compositional factors.
All forms are included within matter, whereas main minds and mental factors are included within consciousness.
Forms are also divided into external forms and internal forms, with an extra category of <i>non-revelatory form</i> .
External forms are divided into the [visible] form, sound, smell, taste and touch; whereas internal forms are the five sense powers that are included within the continuum of a person.
An example of a non-revelatory form is: during the motivation phase before a physical or verbal expression, there is an intention to perform either a virtuous or an non-virtuous action, this intention is asserted as a form which is not perceptible to the [five sense consciousnesses].

Comparison of true existents and false existents:

According to this school, all phenomena are necessarily substantially established, truly established, real.
This is because, for a phenomenon to exist [/be an existent], it is not sufficient to merely have a consciousness imputing it. The object must [autonomously exist from its own side]. If there is no real substance/ substantiality right within the object, then merely having the mind imputing it cannot cause it to exist [/become an existent].
While all phenomena are truly established, however, this does not mean that all phenomena are <i>true/ truly existent</i> .
For a phenomenon to be true [/truly existent], the mind apprehending it can never be cancelled, this means, only <i>ultimate truths</i> are <i>true</i> . Therefore, un compounded space for example, is true, since [the mind apprehending it can never be cancelled].
Since that is the case, <i>conventional truths</i> are <i>false</i> [/falsely existent]. Therefore, water for example, is false, since [the mind apprehending it can be cancelled].
Therefore, for this school, they are unable to posit that things and events can exist as merely imputed by the mind. Therefore, whatever that can exist, necessarily has to be truly established/ substantially established [/existing from its own side].

How to identify a Buddhist proponent of tenets and the reasons for this:

A proponent of Buddhist tenet is a Buddhist who accepts the four seals which attest that any particular doctrine is Buddhist.
In the third seal: All phenomena are selfless. All proponents of Buddhist tenets accept that there is not a 'self' that is permanent, unitary and independent.
Therefore, most scholars accept that the third seal refers to the emptiness/ lack of permanent, unitary and independent 'self'.
However, there are some scholars who assert that this has to be understood rather as the emptiness/ lack of self-sufficient, substantially existent person.
The difference in the two interpretations of the third seal has to do with the subdivisions of the Great Exposition School, which is divided into four main schools. When this is further divided, there are eighteen.
One of these is the Vatsiputriyans, who are followers of Vatsiputra. Some texts state that this school assert a <i>self of person</i> .
Seventeen out of these sub-schools assert selflessness of persons, however, some texts state that the Vatsiputriyans assert a self of person.

In some sutras, Buddha actually did assert a self of person. Due to this, the Vatsiputriyans [understood this literally] and thereby assert a self of person, thus asserting that a self-sufficient, substantially existent person [exists].
Nevertheless, all Buddhist tenets, including the Vatsiputriyans, do not assert a self that is permanent, unitary and independent.
Following from the assertions of the Vatsiputriyans, some scholars therefore assert that the Vatsiputriyans are not Buddhist from the perspective of the view. However, other scholars assert they are so, even from the perspective of the view.
This is because, the Vatsiputriyans do not assert a permanent, unitary and independent 'self'.
Therefore, if one were to understand the third seal to mean an emptiness of a permanent, unitary and independent self, then this would also include the Vatsiputriyans as Buddhist [proponents of tenets].
Therefore, a proponent of Buddhist tenets is one who asserts the four seals, with the understanding that the third seal to mean that a permanent, unitary and independent self does not exist.

SQ: Are the '*non-revelatory form*' and '*phenomena-source form*' asserted to be synonymous by all four tenets?

KR: It is clear in the texts that both the Great Exposition School and the Consequent Middle Way School assert *non-revelatory forms*. However, this term does not seem to appear in the assertions of the Sutra, Mind Only and the Autonomy Middle Way Schools.

SQ: Can one take the *substantially established person* as being the *generality of the person*? This is because, the person of the present and future lives exist as a *generality*, whereas the instances/ particulars of the person of the present life does not exist as the instances/ particulars of the person of the future life. As such, can one say the instances of the person exist as a conventional truth, [whereas the generalities of the person exist as an ultimate truth]? This understanding can also be applied to the aggregates as well.

KR: The question posed earlier regarding the person was about the person in general. Therefore, the person in general would seem to be substantially existent [an ultimate truth].

However, when one talks about a specific person, say a person of the present life, whether this is something that is substantially existent would have to be analyzed.

Take *feeling* for example, feeling in general is substantially existent [an ultimate truth]. However, one can refer to a feeling over a specific period of time, say feeling happy for an hour or a day, this is limited only to that time period, after which, it ceases to exist. Since it has ceased, then that feeling of a specific unit of time cannot be a substantial existent. This is because, the mind apprehending it is cancelled. Therefore, this makes the feeling of the day a conventional truth.

If one analyzes further: pleasant, unpleasant and neutral feelings, especially *bliss*...is bliss a conventional or an ultimate truth?

SQ: For the Great Exposition School, the sense power is able to cognize its object. Does this mean that it is a clear form that knows its object? If that is the case, does this mean that this form is clear and knowing.

KR: They assert that both the consciousness and the sense power see the object together. The sense power alone cannot perceive the object. This is because, if the sense consciousness alone can perceive object, then it should be able to perceive forms behind walls.

Lesson 6

20 March 2013

The 'self / I / person' that exists and does not exist:

The 'self / I / person' does exist, and it is this that wishes to be happy and avoid suffering. However, when one attempts to investigate into its exact nature, [one finds that] the four Buddhist tenets each have its own explanations to what exactly it is.
Particularly, for those who assert past and future lives and believe in reincarnation, it is even more important to discover what exactly is the 'self / I / person' that moves on from life to life, that accumulates karma and experiences its results.
This applies equally among the non-Buddhists who assert reincarnation: they too have to account for the 'self / I / person' that moves from life to life.
Many among them concluded and believed that the 'self / I / person' is permanent, unitary and independent. For them, this is the only way/ mode/ manner to assert the 'self / I / person'.
However, Buddhist [tenets] refute such a notion of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person'.
Non-Buddhists' mode of apprehension of the permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person': For the non-Buddhists who assert reincarnation and a 'self / I / person', it must be: 1) permanent, unitary and independent, as well as 2) being completely distinct/ separate/ unrelated and an independent entity from the body and mind [/aggregates].
This is because, they do not how to relate the 'self / I / person' to the body and mind. They are unable to posit a 'self / I / person' that is dependent on/ related to/ of the same entity with the body and mind.
All proponents of Buddhist tenets unanimously assert that a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person' does not exist whatever, there <i>cannot be</i> a 'self / I / person' that is: <i>not dependent/ of a different entity from the body and mind</i> .

6. Way of asserting selflessness

Subtle selflessness and subtle selflessness of persons are asserted to be equivalent. A selflessness of phenomena is not accepted because it is accepted that if it is an established base it is necessarily a self of phenomena. Among them, the Followers of Vatsiputra, [one of the eighteen sub-schools,] accept a selflessness of person that is [a person] being empty of being permanent, unitary, and independent. However, they do not accept a selflessness of person that is [a person] being empty of being self-sufficient substantially [established] because they accept a self-sufficient substantially [established] self that is inexpressible even in terms of being one entity with or a different entity from the aggregates, and being permanent or impermanent.

All Buddhist tenets are similar in asserting the non-existence of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person'.

Among the many divisions of the Great Exposition School, one subdivision is called the Followers of Vatsiputra/Vatsiputrians.

Being a proponent of Buddhist tenets, they also do not assert a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person'. However, this sub-school does assert a self-sufficient, substantially [established] person.

They do not know how to posit a person that is of the same entity as the body and mind. For if it is, they do not know how to explain how it can move from life to life.

Nevertheless, they also cannot reject that the 'self / I / person' to of the same entity as the body and mind. This is due to what Buddha had said in some sutras, that the 'self / I / person' is of the same entity with the body and mind.

Therefore, they assert that a self-sufficient, substantially existent person exists, but it is neither a same entity with, nor a different entity from the aggregates, [therefore, it is 'inexpressible'.]

Buddha taught in a few sutras that there is not a 'self / I / person' that is of a different entity from the body and mind. However, the Vatsiputrians find it difficult to assert a 'self / I / person' that is of the same entity with the body and mind.

Therefore, they assert that there is a self-sufficient, substantially existent self that is 'inexpressible' in terms of being one entity with or of a different entity from the aggregates.

Over and above this, they also have difficulties asserting whether the 'self / I / person' is permanent or impermanent. Due to this, similarly, they also assert that the 'self / I / person' is also 'inexpressible' in terms of being permanent or impermanent.

The Vatsiputrians are the only proponents of Buddhist tenets who assert a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.

All other Buddhist tenets: the rest of the Great Exposition School, Sutra School, Mind Only School and Middle Way School all assert that the self-sufficient, substantially existent person does not exist whatever.

The fallacies of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person':

What the non-Buddhists refer to as their 'soul' or 'Atman' and so on, essentially refers to a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person'.

This is asserted by many non-Buddhists, which is in contrast to what Buddha taught. Such a 'soul/ self / I / person' does not exist whatever.

Simply stated, 'selflessness' can mean that Buddha taught that a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person' does not exist, hence 'less' [or devoid] of such a self.

What can be a coarse selflessness of person: According to the Great Exposition School, Sutra School, Mind Only School and the Autonomy Middle Way School, the *non-existence of such a permanent, unitary and independent person* can be taken as the *coarse selflessness of person*.

What can be a subtle selflessness of person: [Similarly, according to these schools], the *non-existence of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person* is the *subtle selflessness of person*.

The Consequent Middle Way School, however, has a different presentation on what is the [coarse and] subtle selflessness of person.

The fallacies of a permanent 'self': If one asserts a 'self / I / person' that is permanent, it would mean that it [does not undergo] momentary change. If that is the case, then how does one posit a 'self / I / person' that experiences happiness and suffering, [both of which do change in this life and future lives,] as well as achieving liberation and enlightenment?

The fallacies of an independent 'self': If one asserts a 'self / I / person' that is independent, it would mean that it is independent of causes and conditions. If that is the case, then how does one posit a 'self / I / person' that exists that is independent of causes and conditions?

For Buddhists, it is extremely difficult to account for a 'self / I / person' that is independent of causes and conditions.

The fallacies of an unitary 'self': If one asserts a 'self / I / person' that is unitary, it would mean that it is partless. [This would mean that it pervades all phenomena.]
According to the Great Exposition School, directionally partless particles and temporally partless moments of consciousnesses exist. What would be the problem of asserting a partless 'self'? [<i>If the person is partless, it cannot be consciousness. MOE 327</i>]
They assert that the 'self / I / person' is truly established and an ultimate truth. It is <i>not</i> a phenomenon such that an awareness apprehending it is cancelled if it is broken up or mentally separated into its individual parts.
This means, according to this school, the 'self / I / person' is not a conventional truth but is an ultimate truth/ substantially existent.
There is an 'I' that came from the previous lives, in fact, from time without beginning up to now; there is also an 'I' that will move on from this life to the next.
According to this school, such an 'I' is truly established. Such a 'self / I / person' would probably be an ultimate truth as well.
However, is this 'self / I / person' necessarily partless? That is, here, if it is an ultimate truth, is it necessarily partless?
If it is a partless phenomenon, it is necessarily an ultimate truth. However, if it is an ultimate truth, is it necessarily partless?
The 'self / I / person' is an ultimate truth in this system, nevertheless, one cannot say that it is partless.

The way the 'I' exists in reality and the way it appears:

In essence, for Buddhist proponent of tenets, a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person' does not exist whatsoever. The non-existence of such a self is the coarse selflessness of person.
On the basis of remembering that the coarse selflessness of person means the non-existence of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person', one should analyze, using many reasons, all the fallacies of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person'.
When one derives at an <i>ascertainment/ certainty in one's heart</i> that such a 'self / I / person' does not exist, such an understanding would constitute <i>an understanding of the coarse selflessness of person</i> .
The way one sees oneself, one has a very strong believe that the 'I/ me' of yesterday and the 'I/ me' of today is exactly the same person, nothing has changed. Therefore, this is the appearance of an unchanging 'self / I / person', which is so real.
However, such a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person' does not exist whatsoever.
Although one has an appearance of a 'self / I / person' that does not change over time, the reality is that it has changed, as it is not permanent.
The 'I' of yesterday does not exist/ has already ceased to exist/ has disintegrated. In this sense, the 'I' has changed. However, this is mere coarse impermanence, it is not even subtle impermanence.
Thus, when one has an understanding of coarse impermanence that is not mere words, even having this is very helpful. This is because, it can help counteract many of one's afflictions.
Above this, if one can come to understand that the 'self / I / person' is changing each moment, down to the smallest unit of time, that it does not exist even for a moment, then this constitutes an understanding of subtle impermanence.
Such an understanding can really be an enormous remedy to counteract one's afflictions of the three mental poisons.
In reality, the 'self / I / person' does not exist for even the smallest unit of time, for every moment it is already different. This is the reality. However, the reality does not appear to one, what appears to one is the 'unchanging I' that remains the same.
In essence, when one comes to realize the non-existence of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person', such a realization will be very helpful in counteracting one's coarse afflictions: one's coarse anger, attachment and ignorance.

What is a self-sufficient, substantially existent person:

The non-existence of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person' is the <i>coarse</i> selflessness of persons.
At a deeper level, there is the <i>subtle selflessness of person</i> , which is the non-existence of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.
With the exception of the Consequent Middle Way School, all the rest of the Buddhist tenets, from the Great Exposition School up to the Autonomy Middle Way School, analyze the 'I' on the basis that it exists from its own side.
Therefore, on the basis that the 'I' exists from its own side, these other schools investigate and focus on how there is <i>not</i> a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, what the fallacies would be if such a person exists.
When one looks into one's own experiences, when one has the idea of oneself as a person/ I, one would have this believe that "I am the possessor of the aggregates."

One has this believe that “I own my body and mind, I am the utilizer of my aggregates.”
One's view of one's 'self / I / person' in relation to one's body and mind is similar to the relation between a businessman or a trader and the goods he owns:
One's 'self / I / person' is like the businessman that owns the goods he trades in, one's body and mind.
Such a believe in the 'self / I / person' being the owner of the body and mind is innate and not taught, thus it arises naturally.
One has this very innate strong sense of 'self / I / person' being the owner of one's body and mind.
How one's 'I' is like the owner of one's body: One knows this well, for example, when one is ill with pain, then when one sees another healthy person free of pain, one can have this idea: “How nice it would be if I can have that person's body!”
One does not have the wish to exchange the 'self / I / person', but just to exchange bodies [as if one owns it].
Similarly, when one sees someone who is physically more attractive than oneself, one can have the wish thinking, “If I were as handsome as that person...or, if I can have that beautiful body, how nice it would be...”
This shows that, if one can have the choice to exchange bodies, one probably would do so. This is of course, not possible.
Therefore, this shows that the 'self / I / person' is like the owner of the body, which is like something that can be traded or exchanged, just like a businessman can do whatever he wishes with the goods he owns. This is how one feels.
How one's 'I' is like the owner of one's mind: It is the same with one's mind. One feels that one owns one's mind.
One has different types of minds, for example, one's intelligence/ wisdom. If one is not so intelligent, not so wise, then when one sees another person who is very intelligent or wise, one may think, “How wonderful it is if I had his wisdom!”
One does not think “If I can have his 'self / I / person’”, but “his intelligence/ wisdom/ memory”, and to exchange them with one's mind if it is possible. Such a wish is innate, not taught.
In this case, the 'self / I / person' does not seem to be dependent on the body and mind whatsoever. Rather, one has the idea that one's body and mind is dependent on one's 'self / I / person'. Thus, the 'I' becomes like the owner.
One therefore has an innate believe that the 'self / I / person' is the owner/ possessor of one's body and mind, not dependent on one's body and mind but being the owner.
Such a believe is an apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.
Therefore, the permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person' does not exist, likewise, the 'self / I / person' being the possessor of the body and mind also does not exist.

Relationship between the 'self / I / person' and its aggregates:

In the apprehension of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person', 'permanent' here refers to the 'self / I / person' being completely <i>not dependent on/ unrelated to</i> the body and mind/ aggregates.
In the apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, it is similar to this but has a subtle difference:
The apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person has the idea that the 'self / I / person' <i>is</i> the possessor of the aggregates, therefore, it is not dependent on the body and mind [and thus is a similar apprehension as above.]
However, [what is subtly different is that], the body and mind is in some kind of dependence/ reliance on the 'self / I / person'.
With the exception of the Consequent Middle Way School, the presentations of the [coarse and subtle] selflessness of person applies to the rest, Great Exposition School, Sutra School, Mind Only School and Autonomy Middle Way School:
Coarse selflessness of person: the <i>non-existence</i> of a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person'
Subtle selflessness of person: the <i>non-existence</i> of a self-sufficient, substantially existent 'self / I / person'.

The mode of apprehension of the self-sufficient, substantially existent 'self / I / person':

Even though one may be able to verbalize what a permanent, unitary and independent 'self / I / person' is, however, it is not easy to gain an ascertainment/ conviction on it.
This is because, one has to prove to one's <i>own mind</i> that the 'self / I / person' is not permanent, unitary and independent.
This is done by repeatedly checking/ reading the texts, analyzing and discussing about them. When one arrives at an understanding through such a process, then one can say that one has gained an understanding of the coarse selflessness of person.
The non-existence of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person is more subtle than the non-existence of a permanent, unitary and independent person.
The object of negation/ object to be refuted is more subtle, which means it is more difficult to understand, [therefore, more difficult to remove.]

The apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person should be looked at from one's own experience:
How does such a mind operate? What does this mind think when it apprehends the person to be like the owner/ possessor of the body and mind?
When one checks [deeper] into one's own experiences, one would be able to see that one really <i>believes</i> that one is the owner of one's body and mind:
The 'self / I / person' is <i>not completely unrelated</i> to the body and mind, because it <i>believes</i> that it is the possessor of its body and mind.
The manner/ mode of apprehension is this: the 'self / I / person' seems to be completely independent of the body and mind, whereas the body and mind seem to be dependent on the 'self / I / person'.
Such a mode of apprehension can be further understood from the earlier example: how one has an innate wish to exchange one's body and/ or mind with others. This is an innate/ natural apprehension.
One believes that: 1) the 'self / I / person' is the owner/ possessor of the body and mind, 2) it is independent of the body and mind/ it is self-sufficient [from the body and mind.]
Even though this is the case, however, such an 'self / I / person' does not exist in the way it appears to one's mind.
Therefore, there isn't a self-sufficient 'self / I / person' that is the possessor or owner of its body and mind/ independent of them.
Even though one can verbalize these statements, nevertheless, it is another matter altogether to be able to ascertain this from one's heart that such a self-sufficient, substantially existent person does not exist.
How the 'mode of apprehension' and 'object of abandonment' are different: SQ: Does one need to abandon the intellectually acquired apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person <i>before</i> abandoning the innate apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person? KR: Yes
SQ: However, is the <i>object of abandonment</i> not the same: one meditates on separating the individual aggregates from this 'self / I / person' to realize it does not exist? Therefore, would it not be sufficient merely to abandon the innate apprehension?
KR: Afflictions can be divided into intellectually acquired afflictions and innate afflictions. In the case of the apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, it is also the same: there are intellectually acquired and innate forms.
The meditation/ antidote to abandon these two types of apprehension is the same, [which is using the wisdom realizing the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.]
However, the <i>modes of apprehension</i> of these two minds are nevertheless different:
1) The mode of apprehension of the <i>intellectually acquired</i> self-sufficient, substantially existent person is essentially similar [but <i>not the same</i> as] to the mode of apprehension of the permanent, unitary and independent person: the <i>mode/ way/ manner</i> of this mind apprehending its object is to apprehend/ grasp at the 'self / I / person' to be a <i>separate entity</i> from the aggregates.
2) The mode of apprehension of the <i>innate</i> self-sufficient, substantially existent person: the <i>mode/ way/ manner</i> of this mind apprehending its object is not to apprehend/ grasp at the self-sufficient person to be a separate entity from the aggregate, but as the owner/ controller of its aggregates.

Comparison of the object of abandonment and the mode of apprehension of the two 'selves':

All Buddhist tenets except the Consequent Middle Way School	Coarse self of person (intellectually acquired): Apprehension of -	Subtle self of person: Apprehension of -	
		Intellectually acquired	Innate
Object of abandonment/ Object of the mode of apprehension	Permanent, unitary and independent person, which does not exist	Self-sufficient, substantially existent person, which does not exist	
Mode of apprehension	Apprehends the person to be permanent, unitary and independent, and as a <i>separate entity</i> from the aggregates	Apprehends the person to be a <i>separate entity</i> , being self-sufficient/ not dependent/ does not rely on its body and mind, but as the controller/ owner/ possessor of its body and mind, which are being owned/ controlled/ possessed by the person. In addition, the innate apprehension apprehends the aggregates as being dependent on the self-sufficient person.	
How the intellectually acquired and innate afflictions are differentiated:	Such a mode of apprehending the person came about due to the process of <i>thinking/ learning</i> . [That is why, through wrong conclusion, this apprehension <i>thinks</i> that its 'I' is separate from the body and mind.]	Such a mode of apprehending the person came about <i>naturally</i> since time without beginning and not due to the process of thinking/ learning.	

SQ: What are the illustrations of an ultimate truth that has parts?

KR: Person and any of the five aggregates.

SQ: Is the person substantially [established] but not self-sufficient?

KR: For this school, if it is an established base, it is necessarily substantially established. This means the person [that exists] is necessarily substantially established. However, the self-sufficient, substantially existent person does not exist. This phrase is used to highlight how one innately views oneself as the controller and possessor to one's body and mind. [This mind] does not view [the person] as unrelated to its body and mind, but merely as a controller/ owner of its body and mind.

KQ: Are partless particles self-sufficient, substantially existent? SR: Yes.

K: They are substantially established. However, is it self-sufficient? SR: Yes.

K: However, you say that there is no self-sufficient, substantially existent person. How then, do you prove that the partless particle is self-sufficient?

If the partless particle is self-sufficient, [then it would mean that it does not depend on its previous moment of partless particle to come about, then this would mean that it is permanent. If partless particle is permanent, then it would not be form, as form is necessary impermanent.]

Lesson 7

21 March 2013

Why it is necessary to eliminate the self of person:

All proponents of Buddhist tenets assert that the apprehension of a self/ ego-grasping is the source of sufferings and problems
This grasping/ apprehension is essentially an wrong mind that apprehends the 'self / I / person' to exist in contradiction to reality.
Proponents of Great Exposition School up to the Autonomy Middle Way School [share the same] assertions of the selflessness of person, which are divided into the coarse and subtle selflessness of person.
Even though the 'self / I / person' is not permanent, one apprehends it to be permanent/ unchanging. From one's own experiences, one believes [intellectually] that one will never change, that one is permanent.
Due to this, this becomes the basis for the arisal of the afflictions like strong anger and attachment.
Such a belief is the apprehension/ grasping at that which is impermanent [in reality] to be permanent.
For example, one may think one would live for a hundred years. This is a coarse apprehension of permanence. Based on such an apprehension, this would give rise to all sorts of afflictions.
One believes that things are never changing and always static. The basis of such a conception comes from an innate belief that there is a 'self / I / person' that is self-sufficient, able to exist on its own.
The Great Exposition School up to the Autonomy Middle Way School assert the subtle apprehension of a self, [they say] such an apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent 'self / I / person' is the root of all suffering, the root of samsara.
To eliminate suffering, one necessarily has to eliminate its root: the apprehension of a self, which is asserted by these schools as the apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent 'self / I / person'.
Therefore, if one wishes to eradicate suffering, then one needs to eradicate such an ego-grasping ignorance that apprehends the 'self / I / person' to be self-sufficient, substantially existent.
The way to do so is to generate the wisdom realizing the selflessness of person. Therefore, one needs to understand this.

Why the apprehension of a permanent, unitary and independent person is necessarily intellectually acquired:

The coarse apprehension of a self of person, apprehending the 'self / I / person' to be permanent, unitary and independent is asserted in many great treatises to be an intellectually acquired affliction.
Such an apprehension arose from thinking [about it, it did not arise] naturally/ innately. One needs to analyze why it is intellectually acquired through thinking and [did not arise] naturally/ innately.
[For example, when one comes into contact with an attractive object, by simply seeing the object, innate attachment arises naturally without any need to think or with any reasons.]
[On the other hand, for an intellectually acquired affliction, there would not be any manifest attachment towards the object upon first contact with it. However, after some time focusing on it, with thinking and reasoning, attachment slowly arises.]
[Therefore, applying such an analogy here: when the mind focuses on the 'self / I / person', it being permanent, unitary and independent does not arise naturally without any need to think or with reasoning.]
[The sense of the 'self / I / person' being permanent, unitary and independent arises only after the mind has had some time to think over this 'I', how it came about and so on. Slowly, the sense of it being permanent, unitary and independent then arise.]

Comparison of the apprehension of the coarse and subtle self of person:

The subtle apprehension of self of person, the apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent 'self / I / person' apprehends/ conceives it to be self-sufficient, able to exist on its own independently from the body and mind.
Therefore, such a mind apprehends the 'self / I / person' to be not dependent/ does not rely on its body and mind, this is how it is [said to be] self-sufficient. It [also believes] it is the controller/ owner/ possessor of its body and mind.
Such a belief in its being independent and a controller is innate, naturally occurring and never taught.
To the view of such a conception, the aggregates/ body and mind are dependent on the 'self / I / person', being controlled by it
This mind [would innately believe] that: "I am the controller of my body and mind, so I don't depend/ rely on them, rather, my body and mind is being controlled by/ is dependent on me."
In contrast, the coarse apprehension of a self of person apprehends the body and mind to be of a completely separate/ unrelated entity to the 'self / I / person'.
The subtle apprehension of a self of person does not apprehend the 'self / I / person' to be completely separate/ unrelated entity to the body and mind.
SQ: Can one say that the innate subtle apprehension of a self of person has the two characteristics of: a) not separate, because it has some relationship with the aggregates, and b) independent, because it owns the aggregates?
KR: this apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent 'self / I / person' apprehends it to be not relying on its body and mind, thus, in that sense, it is [also] independent [at the same time.]
S: yes, being the owner, it is not reliant on its aggregates, therefore it is independent of them. However, at the same time, it is also not separate from the aggregates as distinct from the coarse apprehension.
K: Yes, it is not completely unrelated between the 'self / I / person' and the body and mind, which is different from the coarse apprehension. In the former, the aggregates are dependence/ reliant by the 'self / I / person', which owns them.

Detailed aspects of the apprehension of a self-sufficient person:

The object of the apprehension of the self-sufficient person: The apprehension of the self-sufficient person apprehends the ' <u>self / I / person</u> ' itself.
The mode of apprehension of the self-sufficient person: The way/ manner/ mode of apprehension of the self-sufficient person apprehends the person to be <i>not reliant</i> on the body and mind, therefore, [the mode of apprehension] is a ' <u>self-sufficiency</u> ' of the 'self / I / person'.
The divisions of the apprehension of the self-sufficient person: There are two – an intellectually acquired and an innate apprehension. The former arises due to processes of thinking, whereas the latter arises naturally without being taught.
The Vatsiputrians believe that a self-sufficient, substantially existent person exists. [This is an example] of an apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person that is intellectually acquired due to it arising from tenets.

Selflessness of person and its divisions:

What is the selflessness of person: The non-existence of the two apprehensions/ grasping of the self of persons is the selflessness of persons.
Its divisions: [Corresponding to the two self of persons,] there are the coarse selflessness of person and the subtle selflessness of person.

Why the apprehension of a self-sufficient person is a wrong consciousness:

The apprehension of the subtle self of person is wrong conception and the root of samsara.
It is a wrong consciousness because, due to the person appearing to this mind, it apprehends the person to be self-sufficient. Even though a self-sufficient person appears, in reality, a self-sufficient person does not exist. Therefore, although there is an appearance and grasping of the self-sufficient person, the object that this mind grasps at, the self-sufficient person, does not exist whatsoever. [Since this mind grasps at something that does not exist, therefore, it is a wrong consciousness.]

How to establish that the self-sufficient, substantially existent person does not exist:

According to the great logician Dharmakirti in his <i>Pramanavarttika</i> , he gave this line of reasoning: <i>"The subject, the self-sufficient person that is not relying on the aggregates, does not exist naturally, because it is by nature not one with nor different from the aggregates."</i>
The <i>subject</i> of one's inquiry: the self-sufficient person that is not relying on the body and mind.
<i>Predicate</i> [the assertion]: does not exist naturally.
The <i>reason</i> : because such an 'I' is not established to be either naturally one with nor naturally different from the aggregates.

One has to establish this: <i>Although the self-sufficient person appears and is apprehended by oneself, nevertheless, this self-sufficient person does not exist in the manner that it appears.</i>
These tenets [of the lower schools] assert that if any phenomenon were to exist, it necessarily has to exist from its own side/ inherently/ naturally/ by its [own] nature.
If this self-sufficient person exists, then it has to exist either <i>inherently/ naturally/ by nature one with</i> the aggregates or, it has to be <i>inherently/ naturally/ by nature different from</i> the aggregates.
This is because, if any phenomenon were to exist, it can only and exhaustively exist in two ways [/two possibilities]: a) it is inherently one with the object, or b) it is inherently different from the object. [There isn't a third possibility.]
Therefore, in this case, if the self-sufficient person were to exist, then it has to be either inherently one with the body and mind, or it has to be inherently different from the body and mind. [Likewise, there isn't a third possibility.]
a) First possibility – the self-sufficient person being inherently one with the body and mind: Can anyone posit that the self-sufficient person is of the <i>same</i> entity with the body and mind? The answer is no.
This is because, if the self-sufficient person is of the same entity with the body and mind, then just as this person is self-sufficient, then it would entail the fallacy that the body and mind would also be self-sufficient, substantially existent.
This would absurdly mean that the aggregates would exist without having to rely on [other factors].
If the aggregates self-sufficiently exist without relying other factors, then it would absurdly mean that the aggregates are permanent, not dependence on causes and conditions.
This is never the case, as the aggregates are clearly impermanent and dependent on causes and conditions [to come about].
Since this is the case, this shows that the self-sufficient person cannot be of the same entity with the body and mind.
b) Second possibility – the self-sufficient person being inherently different from the body and mind: Can anyone posit that the self-sufficient person is of the <i>different</i> entity from the body and mind? The answer is also no.
This is because, if the self-sufficient person is of the different entity from the body and mind, then if one were to [conceptually] eliminate the body and mind individually, towards the end of [this process], one should be able to find a self-sufficient person existing on its own.
The reasoning of one and many has been taught numerous times. This reasoning of [the existence of any phenomenon necessarily] being either one [with its object] or different [from its object] is an important reasoning that is frequently used to establish the view of selflessness.
Through hearing/ listening, thinking/ reflecting and so forth, positive imprints are definitely left on one's mental continuum, which will ripen in the future.

Grounds and paths of the Great Exposition School: RT page 4

7. Presentation of the grounds and paths - This is explained in two parts: 1. objects of abandonment and 2. actual presentation of the grounds and paths. 7A. Objects of abandonment - Two types of obscurations are asserted: 1. afflictive obscurations and 2. non-afflictive obscurations.
Objects of abandonment: There are two types of obscurations: afflictive and non-afflictive obscurations.
Afflictive obscurations refer to that which obstructs the attainment of liberation, whereas non-afflictive obscurations refer to the obstructions to [all-knowingness].
There is no such thing as the convention 'obscurations to knowledge.'
In this school, the term [and therefore, the phenomenon] 'obscurations to knowledge' does not exist.
Buddha's all-omniscient mind is the mind that sees directly and simultaneously the modes and varieties of phenomena, i.e., the two truths directly and simultaneously. However, the Great Exposition School refutes this.
This school does not assert that there is such a knower, an all-omniscient mind that can perceive each and every phenomena directly and simultaneously in one moment of mind/ cognition.
Perhaps, due to such a believe, they assert 'obscurations to knowledge' or 'obscurations to omniscience' does not exist.
All other schools accept that the all-omniscient mind directly perceives all phenomena in one moment as clearly as seeing a pile of seeds on one's palm.
The Great Exposition School finds it difficult to conceive such a mind that can [perform such a function].

They also assert that the Buddha's form aggregate/ his body is true suffering just like the bodies of [sentient beings.]
All other tenet systems assert that Buddha's form aggregate is Buddha.
Afflictive obscurations mainly prevent the attainment of liberation and non-afflictive obscurations mainly prevent the attainment of all-knowingness. Illustrations of afflictive obscurations are, for example, the conception apprehending the person to be self-sufficient substantially existent and the three poisons that arise due to the force of that [conception] together with their seeds.
What are afflictive obscurations: 1) It is an apprehension of a 'self/ I / person' that is the conception apprehending it to be self-sufficient substantially existent. 2) This is the basis, the root, arising from this are the three mental poisons: [other] ignorance, anger and attachment together with their seeds. 3) Seeds refer to the seeds planted/ placed by this conception apprehending the person to be self-sufficient, substantially existent as well as [seeds planted by] the three mental poisons. Therefore, all the above 1) 2) and 3) are asserted to be afflictive obscurations.
[Illustrations of] non-afflictive obscurations are, for example, the latencies (<i>bag chags</i>) of the conception apprehending the person to be self-sufficient substantially existent and the <i>negative [dysfunctional] tendencies of the mind</i> that arise due to the force of those [latencies].
The difference between 'seed' and 'latency': The Tibetan word for 'seed' is <i>sag bung</i> and the Tibetan word for 'latency' is <i>bag chags</i> . These two words are generally different: in this context, seeds are afflictive obscurations, whereas latencies [/imprints / predispositions] are non-afflictive obscurations. Therefore, one should make a differentiation between: 'seeds and imprints', 'seeds and predispositions' and 'seeds and latencies'. The latencies/ imprints of the conception apprehending the person to be self-sufficient, substantially existent are also planted by the same <i>conception</i> apprehending the person to be self-sufficient, substantially existent, which also planted the seeds. Therefore, both 'seeds' and 'latencies' are planted by the same conception. However, if the seed, that is planted by the conception apprehending the person to be self-sufficient, substantially existent, has the potential/ power to <i>produce</i> in the future the same [type of] <i>conception</i> , then this is called a 'seed'.
What are non-afflictive obscurations: The 'latency' of the conception apprehending the person to be self-sufficient, substantially existent is also planted by this conception. However, this 'latency' does not have the power to produce in the future another conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person. It is only able to <i>produce</i> a mere <i>appearance</i> of a 'self-sufficient, substantially existent person'. Analogy of the 1) smell of an onion and 2) the onion itself: 1) There is something that is able to produce just the <i>smell</i> of an onion but not the onion itself. This is likened to the <i>latencies/ imprints/ predispositions</i> of a conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person. 2) There is also something that is able to produce the <i>onion</i> itself. This is likened to the <i>seed</i> of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.
What is 'negative [dysfunctional] tendencies' of the mind: It clouds/ obstructs the mind from knowing its object [the four causes of non-knowingness <small>CTA page 205</small>]. Illustrations are the four non-afflictive obstructions that is the non-knowingness of - 1) [<i>The profound and subtle qualities of a Buddha</i>]: for example, the Arhat <i>Shariputra</i> was unable to know the total number of practices of morality that the Buddha had accumulated and also exactly every quality in Buddha's mind. 2) [<i>The distant place of the object</i>]: for example, the Arhat <i>Mudgalyayana</i> could not see where his mother took rebirth, as it was a very distant place. 3) [<i>The distant time of the object</i>]: for example, in the <i>LamRim</i> teachings, there is the story about Shariputra's refusal to ordain one lay person. This was because, he could not see [any time in the lay person's past lives] any roots of virtues to become ordained and to achieve liberation. However, Buddha could see that 100 eons ago, while this person was a fly, it managed to circumambulate a stupa. Due to this root of virtue, Buddha knew he had the roots of virtue to be ordained and achieve liberation. 4) [<i>The nature of the object, such as the subtle details of the relationship of karma and its effects</i>]: Due to inability to know the countless complex subtle nature. For example, the countless numbers of a person's past lives detailed nature; the complex subtle nature of a peacock's fan, all its colors, designs and shapes came from countless complex individual causes. Therefore, there are many such factors of non-knowingness in the mental continua of Arhat foe destroyers. Such non-knowingness is not an affliction, but an obscuration, a non-afflictive obscuration.

A person is known as a foe destroyer due to having destroyed the afflictions, therefore, one does not need to destroy anything other than the afflictions.

Since the afflictive obscuration prevents/ interferes/ hinders the attainment of liberation and the non-afflictive obscuration prevents/ interferes/ hinders the attainment of all-knowingness, therefore, there are these differences in types of obstructions.

In reality, when something does not exist, it does not mean another thing exists:

SQ: For this school, what does the wisdom realizing the subtle selflessness of person realize? What is its mode of existence? When it realizes the selflessness of person, how does it realize the person to exist?

K: Your [initial] question and the later question is different. [*What* is the realization and *how* it realizes are different].

KR: Phenomena can be divided into positive and negative phenomena. Within the division of negative phenomena, generally, these are further subdivided into non-affirming negatives and affirming negatives.

The Great Exposition School does not assert non-affirming negatives:

<i>Phenomena</i>	<i>Positive phenomena – e.g., a pot</i>	
	<i>Negative phenomena – e.g., a non-pot (all other phenomena which are not a pot)</i>	<i>Affirming negative phenomena – e.g., affirms the existence of ALL other phenomena which are not a pot</i>
		<i>Non-affirming negative phenomena – e.g., does not affirm the existence of all other phenomena which are not a pot (this is rejected by the Great Exposition School, see reason below)</i>

For example, they are unable to posit *space* the way the higher schools do, which posit it to be a mere negation [mere absence] of obstructive contact, [which *does not* affirm the existence of other phenomena which are non-obstructive contact.]

For the Great Exposition School, they are unable to posit this because, if something exists, it is necessarily substantially established, something there appearing/ existing from its own side. [Therefore, there is no need to investigate further whether other phenomena exist or not.] For them, an existent/ a substance is necessarily able to perform functions.

In reality, the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person is a non-affirming negative, which is merely a negation/ absence of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person [which *does not affirm* the existence of something else].

However, the Great Exposition School does not know how to posit a non-affirming negative. Even though this emptiness [is in reality] a non-affirming negation, for them, this emptiness cannot be a non-affirming negative.

They do not know how to posit a non-existence of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person which is a mere negation, [a negation that does not affirm the existence of something else,] a non-affirming negative.

Since the non-affirming negative does not perform any functions, and since they assert anything that exists necessarily performs functions, therefore, they reject the existence of it being a non-affirming negative.

As explained in the previous Lorig module on *Yogic direct perceivers*, a yogic direct perceiver realizes the emptiness of the self of person [*implicitly*] through realizing that the aggregates to be devoid of such a 'self' [*explicitly*].

Lorig root text: "a yogic direct perceiver explicitly realizes compositional factors which are devoid of a self of persons and implicitly realizes the selflessness of persons."

SQ: How does the Great Exposition School assert that the 'person is substantially existent' in the term 'self-sufficient, substantially existent person'?

KR: In this school, substantially existent is mutually inclusive with ultimate truth.

If the mind apprehending its object cannot be cancelled despite [physically] destroying it or mentally separating it into its parts, then this makes the object in question an ultimate truth. This is the meaning of substantial existence.

However, in the case of a 'person that is self-sufficient, substantially existent,' then this has a [different meaning].

General presentation of the three vehicles and five paths:

The convention, 'The three vehicles' are: the Hearers' Vehicle, the Solitary Realizers' Vehicle and the Bodhisattvas' Vehicle.
There are also the Five Paths, which are the paths of: accumulation, preparation, seeing, meditation and no more learning.
[Each vehicle has these five paths,] five paths of the: Hearers' Vehicle, Solitary Realizers' Vehicle and Bodhisattvas' Vehicle.
How the three vehicles are differentiated from the four Buddhist tenets:
In the historical presentation of tenets and three vehicles, some commentators asserted that the Great Exposition School and Sutra School belong to the Hearers' Vehicle, the Mind Only School belongs to the Solitary Realizers' Vehicle while the Middle Way School belongs to the Mahayana Vehicle. However, this is incorrect.
A proponent of Buddhist tenets is not necessarily someone who has entered any of the three vehicles. The three vehicles can only be asserted in the context of someone who has already entered a path.
In the case of a proponent of any of the four Buddhist tenets, it is not necessarily the case that such a person has generated a <i>path</i> in the mental continuum. As such, this person has yet to enter the path [and thus does not belong to any vehicle].
Therefore, there can be instances of a proponent of Buddhist tenet who has yet to generate any path in the mental continuum.
What is a Hinayanist: A Hinayanist is a <i>person</i> who has entered/ generated the Hinayana Vehicle in the mental continuum.
What is a Hinayana Hearers' Vehicle: There could be a person who has entered the Hinayana Vehicle [of the Hearers' Vehicle] that could be a proponent of the Great Exposition, Sutra, Mind Only or the Middle Way Schools.
What is a Hinayana Solitary Realizers' Vehicle: There could be a person who has entered the Hinayana Vehicle [of the Solitary Realizers' Vehicle] who is a proponent of any of these four Buddhist tenets.
What is a Mahayanist: A Mahayanist is a <i>person</i> who has entered/ generated the Mahayana Vehicle in the mental continuum. Such a person could also be a proponent of any of the four Buddhist tenets.
Therefore, a proponent of Hinayana tenet is not the same as someone who has entered the Hinayana Vehicle/ a Hinayanist.
Likewise, it is incorrect to posit that a proponent of Mahayana tenets is the same as someone who has entered the Mahayana Vehicle/ a Mahayanist. What is the fallacy of positing that a proponent of Mahayana tenet is necessarily a Mahayanist?
In this context, ' <i>vehicle</i> ', ' <i>path</i> ' and ' <i>clear realization</i> ' are synonymous.
The boundary between the presence and absence of a path: the moment a fully qualified renunciation/ the determination to be free, is generated in the mental continuum, then a path is generated.
Therefore, a proponent of any of the four Buddhist tenets need not be one who has generated this fully qualified renunciation.
The five paths of the three vehicles:
The five paths of the Hearers' Vehicle are the Hearers' path of – accumulation, preparation, seeing, meditation and no more learning.
The five paths of the Solitary Realizers' Vehicle are the Solitary Realizers' path of – accumulation, preparation, seeing, meditation and no more learning.
The five paths of the Mahayana Vehicle are the Mahayana path of – accumulation, preparation, seeing, meditation and no more learning.
What is the path of accumulation: In essence, this refers to the time the person, who has entered the respective path, is primarily focused on accumulating the collections. [Within this], mainly through the activities of hearing and reflection on the meaning of the scriptures, particularly on the meaning of selflessness, to gain correct understanding of this.
Three divisions of the path of accumulation: The Small path of accumulation, the Middling path of accumulation and the Great path of accumulation.
What is the path of preparation: In Tibetan ' <i>Jor lam</i> ', sometimes ' <i>Jor wa</i> ', which literary means 'connecting' or 'linking to'.
In contrast to the path of accumulation's focus on hearing and reflecting, here, the focus is on: 1) Cultivating to attain the wisdom arisen from meditation, which is familiarizing the mind on the meanings of scriptures, primarily meditating on selflessness, that have been ascertained through the earlier activities of hearing and reflecting, and 2) Cultivating such a meditation through the medium of a mental image/ meaning generality.
Such a cultivation in this path stops many manifest afflictions of anger, attachment and so on, and prepares the person to actualize the path of seeing, connecting/ linking to the see the truth of selflessness directly as in contrast to seeing only through a mental image.
Through the force of repeated meditation on the meaning of selflessness via a mental image/ meaning generality, the mental continuum is prepared for the eventual direct realization of selflessness.

<p>Four divisions of the path of preparation: The Heat stage path of preparation, Peak stage path of preparation, Forbearance stage path of preparation and the Supramundane stage path of preparation.</p>
<p>What is the path of seeing: It is so called because the person is seeing the truth directly for the first time. With respect to the truth of the object, once this is seen directly, there is nothing more exalted than this. The person now possesses the actual antidote to the afflictions.</p>
<p>Of the two types of obscurations, afflictive and non-afflictive, this wisdom directly perceiving selflessness is the actual antidote to the afflictive obscurations.</p>
<p>Division of the path of seeing: One way is to divide this path into 1) the wisdom of meditative equipoise of the path of seeing, and 2) the wisdom of subsequent attainment [post meditative equipoise] of the path of seeing.</p>
<p>With regards to afflictive obscurations, this can be either the abandonments that is done on the path of seeing or the path of meditation:</p>
<p>What are abandoned on the path of seeing: The afflictive obscurations that are abandoned by the path of seeing are the <i>intellectually acquired</i> afflictions – When a person directly perceives the truth for the first time, this is when the path of seeing is attained. This is [the path where] the intellectually acquired afflictive obscurations [will be] abandoned.</p>
<p>What is the path of meditation: Since, on the path of seeing, there is nothing more exalted to seeing the truth of the object directly, here on this path, the person is <i>repeatedly familiarizing</i> with the realization gained on the path of seeing.</p>
<p>What are abandoned on the path of meditation: The afflictive obscurations that are abandoned by the path of meditation are the <i>innate afflictions</i> – here, one is repeatedly familiarizing the mind on what has been realized earlier.</p>
<p>What is the path of no more learning: This is the time when there is not anymore need to train/ nothing more to learn on the respective vehicle one is on.</p>
<p>What is attained on the path of no more learning: After abandoning all the innate afflictive obscurations by the path of meditation, for example, someone on the Hearers' vehicle achieves the Hearers' path of no more learning. This is the attainment of enlightenment of the Hearers' vehicle, this person achieves the result of a Foe Destroyer/ Hearers' Arhat.</p>
<p>These are general presentations of the three vehicles and five paths.</p>

Specific presentation of paths and grounds of the Great Exposition School: RT page 5

<p>7B. Actual presentation of the grounds and paths</p> <p>It is asserted that there are differences in the way in which the persons of the three vehicles traverse the path. Those of the hearer lineage conjoin the view realizing the person to be empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent with a small collection of merit and, having cultivated that for at least three lifetimes, attain the small enlightenment. Those of the solitary realizer lineage conjoin the view realizing the person to be empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent with a middling collection of merit and, having cultivated that for at least one hundred eons, attain the middling enlightenment. Bodhisattvas conjoin the view realizing the person to be empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent with a great collection of merit and, having cultivated that for at least three countless great eons, attain the great enlightenment. There are differences in the way in which they accumulate merit. Bodhisattvas, having accumulated merit for at least three countless great eons on the great stage of the path of accumulation and below, actualize the heat stage of the path of preparation through to the path of no-more-learning on one [sitting].</p>
<p>The Great Exposition School asserts the object of meditation of all three lineages/ vehicles is the same.</p>
<p>This is because, with respect to the object of negation, the apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, this is the same for all vehicles.</p>
<p>Therefore, for them, the three types of person, Hearers, Solitary Realizers and Bodhisattvas, have the same object of meditation, the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.</p>
<p>However, the time spent accumulating merit differs: 1) Hearers conjoin this meditation with the accumulation of a small collection of merit and, having cultivated that for at least three lifetimes, achieves the Hearer's enlightenment.</p>
<p>2) Solitary Realizers conjoin this meditation with the accumulation of a middling collection of merit and, having cultivated that for at least one hundred eons, achieves the Solitary Realizer's enlightenment.</p>
<p>3) Bodhisattvas conjoin this meditation with the accumulation of a great collection of merit and, having cultivated that for at least three countless great eons, achieves full enlightenment.</p>
<p>For this school, out of the five paths, the Bodhisattva's accumulation of merit for at least three countless great eons occurs on the <i>great stage path of accumulation</i> and below.</p>
<p>Therefore, since the accumulation of merit occurs primarily on the path of accumulation, this is how the term 'path of accumulation' is derived at.</p>

After having accumulated this vast amount of merit on the path of accumulation, the Bodhisattva enters into meditative equipoise and actualize the <i>heat stage path of preparation</i> .
Within the same meditative equipoise, this Bodhisattva actualizes the <i>peak, forbearance, supramundane stages of the path of preparation, as well as the paths of seeing and meditation through to the path of no more learning</i> , on one sitting.
For this school, this is how a Bodhisattva achieves enlightenment: from the heat stage (beginning of) path of preparation all the way to no more learning, this is achieved in one meditative equipoise and sitting.
General account of the twelve deeds: There are the twelve deeds of a Buddha: ₁ descent from the Joyous Pure Land, ₂ conception, ₃ birth, ₄ mastery of the arts, ₅ sporting with the retinue, ₆ renunciation, ₇ asceticism, ₈ meditation under the tree of enlightenment, ₉ conquest of the array of demons, ₁₀ becoming a Buddha, ₁₁ turning the wheel of doctrine, and ₁₂ nirvana (death).
For this school, the first deed of descent from the Joyous Pure Land up to the 9 th deed of conquest of the array of demons are performed by an ordinary Bodhisattva, whereas the last three deeds, deeds 10 to 12, are asserted to be deeds of a Buddha.
Hinayana tenets' explanation of Buddha's path to enlightenment: According to the general account of the life of Buddha, he is asserted to have completed the accumulation of merit [only in that life], then sat under the bodhi tree, after subduing the hosts of maras, entered into meditative equipoise, within that equipoise in one sitting, achieves enlightenment.
From among the five paths, the moment of entering into meditative equipoise is asserted by this school to be the <i>heat stage path of preparation</i> .
Thus, in that one sitting, he progressed from the heat stage path of preparation all the way to the path of no more learning.
Why the Buddha's body is not Buddha Jewel: This is the Hinayana [tenet's general] explanation of Buddha's path to enlightenment. Therefore, the person, that entered into meditative equipoise under the bodhi tree after having subdued the maras, is an ordinary being. This is because, a person on the path of preparation is an ordinary being, not a superior.
An ordinary being has ordinary aggregates that are the contaminated body and mind, the results of karma and afflictions. On the basis of that same body, in one meditative equipoise and one sitting, Buddha progressed all the way to enlightenment.
Even though he has achieved enlightenment, the 'contaminated' body is still there in that life from the path of preparation.
Therefore, from the perspective of the Hinayana [tenets], even though he has achieved enlightenment, the Buddha's body is contaminated, is true suffering, is not Buddha Jewel because it is an object of abandonment.
Nevertheless, they do assert the <i>Supreme Emanation Body</i> , which is the form body of Buddha after achieving enlightenment up to but before manifesting the deed of passing into parinirvana.
After passing into parinirvana, they assert that the continua of the body and mind are severed, just like how a butter lamp goes out of existence.
The Mahayana [tenets] assert the <i>Complete Enjoyment Body</i> , which is one of the form bodies of Buddha. The Hinayana [tenets] reject this, as they assert the continua of Buddha's body and mind are severed after passing into parinirvana.
What is nirvana with remainder [of true suffering]: from the perspective of the Hinayana, this refers to the period after Buddha attained enlightenment with his contaminated body [of true suffering] up to passing into parinirvana.
Since Buddha possessed the contaminated body [of true suffering], therefore, this period is [the attainment] of nirvana with remainder [of true suffering].
What is nirvana without remainder [of true suffering]: After passing into parinirvana, beyond the state of sorrow into a sorrowless state, his continua of both body and mind are severed. [They assert this as the nirvana without remainder of true suffering.] Nevertheless, they assert that the non-compositional factor [of the person of Buddha] remains.
Those of the solitary realizer lineage, having accumulated merit for at least one hundred great eons on the great stage of the path of accumulation and below, actualize the heat stage of the path of preparation through to the path of no-more-learning on one seat.
Solitary Realizer also actualize their own [non fully qualified] enlightenment in one meditative sitting, similarly from the <i>heat stage path of preparation all the way to path of no more learning</i> of the Solitary Realizer.
Like the Bodhisattva, the body of the person who has achieved the Solitary Realizer's enlightenment is also contaminated, reason being the same as explained.
Therefore, the period after having achieved the Solitary Realizer's enlightenment up to but before passing into nirvana is also called a nirvana with remainder [of true suffering].
When the Solitary Realizer passes away, he achieves the nirvana without remainder [of true suffering]. Similarly, the continua of body and mind are severed.
This means that there are no more rebirths/ getting another set of aggregates. What is left is [a nirvana without remainder].

Those of the hearer lineage accumulate merit on all four learning paths and, even after having attained a superior's path, must also train on the learning paths for up to fourteen lifetimes.

The '*four learning paths*' are all the paths excluding the path of no more learning. Therefore, it is not the case that the Hearers can only accumulate merit on the path of accumulation and not other learning paths. They do so on all four learning paths.

The Hearers accumulate merit on all four learning paths for at least three lifetimes [up to fourteen]. Upon which, they actualize the Hearers' enlightenment. Thereupon, they also possess a nirvana with remainder and without remainder.

Similarly, after achieving a nirvana without remainder, the [Hearer arhat's] continua of body and mind are severed.

How the Great Exposition School asserts three final vehicles: This school asserts three vehicles, this means that, there are three final fruits of attainment.

This is because, since sentient beings have different dispositions, therefore, [the three] vehicles have their respective *final* fruits of attainment.

This is because, for example, when those of the Hearers' lineage achieved their Hearers' nirvana without remainder, there is no higher goals/ attainments to achieve. This becomes their final fruit of attainment.

The same reasons apply to the Solitary Realizers and Bodhisattvas.

What is abandoned when a Hinayana nirvana with remainder is attained:

In essence, there is the Hinayana nirvana with remainder [of true suffering], which can be further divided into the Hinayana Hearers' nirvana with remainder and the Hinayana Solitary Realizers' nirvana with remainder.

Of the two obscurations, a Hinayana Hearer or Solitary Realizers' nirvana with remainder has abandoned the afflictive obscurations. However, the non-afflictive obscurations are not abandoned [by these two paths].

Even though such a person has achieved the respective nirvana with remainder, he still possesses the four causes of non-knowingness, [See page 20] as such, he is therefore not all-knowing.

What is abandoned when a Hinayana nirvana without remainder is attained:

When the Hinayana arhat achieves the nirvana without remainder, the non-afflictive obscurations also cease to exist.

Such a cessation did not occur due to the force of an antidote, rather, it occurred because the basis for non-afflictive obscurations to exist, [the continua of body and mind] has ceased to exist.

Since the basis has ceased to exist, then for them, that which depend on the basis, the non-afflictive obscurations, also cease to exist.

What is abandoned when a Mahayana nirvana with remainder is attained: this is different for one who achieves the Mahayana path of no more learning, a Buddha who attains a nirvana with remainder.

Buddha is someone who has completely abandoned both the afflictive obscurations and non-afflictive obscurations. Since he has abandoned the four causes of non-knowingness, he realizes all phenomena directly as it is.

For this school, Buddha is all-knowing, such an understanding of all-knowing or [their assertions of omniscience] is unlike the assertions of the Mahayana [tenets]. This school refutes 'obscurations to knowledge.' [See page 19]

They assert Buddha knows every phenomena directly, however, Buddha has to focus on each one of such object serially to know it. The Mahayana [tenets] assert that Buddha directly cognizes every phenomena in one moment simultaneously.

When the proponents of things, [i.e., the Great Exposition, Sutra, and Mind Only schools,] differentiate definitive and interpretive sutras, they differentiate them by means of whether or not they are suitable to be accepted literally.

[Some among] the two schools that propound objects, [i.e., the Great Exposition and Sutra schools,] do not assert the Great Vehicle (*Skt. Mahayana*) scriptural collection to be the Buddha's word because most Proponents of the Great Exposition accept that the sutras are necessarily sutras of definitive meaning.

Proponents of things are proponents of truly existent things. They are primarily the Great Exposition and Sutra School.

It is perhaps alright to include the Mind Only School, as they assert the Thoroughly established natures and Other-powered natures to be truly existent.

Why the Hinayana tenets assert only definitive sutras and refutes interpretive sutras: For the Great Exposition School and Sutra School, they assert that Buddha would not give untrue/ false teachings. Therefore, everything that Buddha taught must be taken literally. Therefore, for them, sutras are only sutras of definitive meaning.

For these proponents of definitive sutras, when they analyze the Mahayana scriptural collections [Mahayana tenet systems], such teachings cannot fit their minds. This is because, the Mahayana teachings cannot be taken literally all the times.

Since it cannot fit their minds due to these sutras not being sutras of definitive meanings, therefore, they refute these Mahayana scriptures to be Buddha's words.

Clarifying doubts on the assertions of the Great Exposition School:

<i>Q1a) What does 'one sitting' mean?</i>
For example, a Bodhisattva on the heat stage path of preparation progresses all the way to enlightenment in one sitting. On the heat stage path of preparation, he enters into meditative equipoise, and within that meditative equipoise he achieves all the paths and manifests enlightenment without arising into the post meditative session.
If you have read Buddha's story, he gained enlightenment literally overnight, from the time he entered into meditative equipoise up till arising from that after achieving enlightenment.
Of course, prior to entering into meditative equipoise, Buddha had already engaged in many practices of austerity. As he sat under the bodhi tree, the host of maras created obstacles for him.
When he overcame them, he entered into meditative equipoise. In that one meditative equipoise sitting/ session, he progressed from the heat stage path of preparation all the way to the path of no more learning within the night.
<i>Q1b) What demarcates a proponent of [Buddhist] tenets?</i>
To be a proponent of Buddhist tenets, firstly, one needs to be a Buddhist, which means one has accepted the Three Jewels as one's final objects of refuge.
So long as one accepts any of the four schools of tenets and is able to propound such tenets to others with [sound] logic and reasoning, then perhaps such a person could be considered a proponent of that Buddhist tenet that he propounds.
A proponent of Buddhist tenets must necessarily have accepted the four seals. One must have thought over the four seals and have accepted them to be necessarily like that.
<i>Q1c) Are the tenet of Great Exposition School presented here, the view of the majority of the sub-schools?</i>
Although there are eighteen sub-schools, however, what was explained was a general presentation that would have been accepted by the majority.
<i>Q2a) [How does a nirvana without remainder exist by its basis of designation?]</i>
There is definitely a substance which is a basis of designation for the term 'nirvana without remainder'. For this school, if it exists, it is necessarily substantially established, therefore, there must be a substance for this term.
Even though when a nirvana without remainder is attained, the continuum of the body and mind is already severed, nevertheless there must still be a basis of designation for it.
For this school, they assert this to be a mere non associated compositional factor. In reality, the continuum of the mind cannot be severed as it has no beginning nor an end.
However, based on this school's fundamental world view, then with respect to the substance that is a nirvana without remainder, they can only assert it as a non associated compositional factor.
<i>Q2b) The Hearer and Solitary Realizer arhats abandon the non-afflictive obscurations by the way at the time of attaining nirvana without remainder, likewise, the Buddha's body and mind are severed. How do they assert Buddha to benefit sentient beings in countless, limitless ways?</i>
The arhats who achieve nirvana without remainder also abandon the non-afflictive obscurations, not through the force of an antidote but by the body and mind going out of existence.
Also, unlike the Mahayana [tenets], this school does not assert Buddha who passed into nirvana without remainder manifests bodies to give teachings and benefiting sentient beings.
For this school, when Buddha passed into nirvana without remainder, a non associated compositional factor is left over. However, whether such a leftover can work for sentient beings or not [is questionable].
For this school, Mahayana arhat/ Buddhahood came about due to having accumulated merits over three countless great eons,
Such a state is all-knowing, having abandoned even the non-afflictive obscurations, which is very different from the Hinayana arhats.
When one has abandoned the non-afflictive obscurations, one becomes all-knowing. So long as one is alive, one can benefit others without mistakes as one knows exactly and correctly how to benefit sentient beings, and [according to this school] when one dies, one achieves the nirvana without remainder.
Such an assertion of the awareness going out of existence/ continuum being severed, at the time of achieving a nirvana without remainder is a Hinayana view/ tenet, not a Mahayana view. Therefore, this is not necessarily a reality.
On one hand, they assert past and future lives, on the other, they assert severance of consciousnesses. Since one can discover fallacies, therefore, this shows that the assertions of this school should not be the final view.

Q3) In this system, when one negates the self-sufficient 'I', how does one know that one has not over-negated the 'I' that exists?
In all cases, when one attempts to negate a 'self' that does not exist, one must correctly identify in <i>experience</i> , the <i>object of negation/ refutation</i> , first.
Therefore, the question is not about whether the 'I' exists or not, but about how it exists.
Therefore, the 'I' does exist, but the object of negation, the self-sufficient, substantially existent 'person' does not exist.
One should target correctly and then understand why this self-sufficient, substantially existent person does not exist.
Therefore, one must distinguish well, for this school, the difference between the substantially existent 'I' that exists and the self-sufficient, substantially existent 'I' that does not exist.
Q4a) A past sprout is posited at the time of the tree, when the sprout has ceased to exist, is the tree itself imputed as a 'past sprout'? When the tree itself ceases to exist and becomes a table, can the 'past sprout' be posited on the table and still exist?
[It is incorrect to posit that the tree is a 'past sprout'.] Take the example of a golden cup, its past, present and future, such an example can also be used in relation to the sprout. These examples illustrate that there is a substance that exists in the past, present and future. However, it is not sure as to exactly what these assertions actually refer to.
Therefore, [in the example of the past, present and future mother,] it is unsure that the substance 'mother' exists or not after ceasing.
Q4b) Both the apprehensions of the intellectually acquired self-sufficient person and the permanent, unitary and independent person apprehends the self that is of a separate entity from the aggregates. When one realizes the permanent, unitary and independent person, does one not also abandon the intellectually acquired self-sufficient person? <small>See table on page 16</small>
One has to be clear with respect to the mode of apprehension of these two minds:
In the apprehension of a permanent, unitary and independent self, what is this mind's way of apprehending the self? Many texts assert that such an apprehension is a coarse apprehension of a self and is intellectually acquired.
In the apprehension a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, what is this mind's way of apprehending the self? For this mind, there can be an intellectually acquired type as well as an innate type.
An example of an intellectually acquired self-sufficient, substantially existent person: the assertion of [the existence] of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person by the Vatsiputrians.
Such an assertion is an intellectually acquired type. This is because, they arrived at such a conclusion through their own thinking/ tenet, intellectually.
The mode of apprehension of an intellectually acquired self-sufficient, substantially existent person is not exactly the same like that of a permanent, unitary and independent person.
When one realizes the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, one necessarily has realized the emptiness of a permanent, unitary and independent self.
This is because, the intellectually acquired afflictions are path of seeing abandonments, which means that this is abandoned by the path of seeing, specifically the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing.
On this uninterrupted path of the path of seeing, one realizes the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person. [Using such a tool,] this uninterrupted path abandons the intellectually acquired afflictions.
For this school, they assert the path of seeing in terms of the eight forbearances and eight knowledges which are abandoned serially. Such [division of the path of seeing] can be applied to the three realms: the desire, form and formless realms.
The afflictions of these three realms are to be abandoned serially and not concurrently. Therefore, there are eight uninterrupted paths [forbearances] and eight paths of release [knowledges], [the eighth knowledge being path of meditation].
Q5) What is the difference between the modes of apprehension of a permanent, unitary and independent person and an intellectually acquired self-sufficient, substantially existent person? <small>See table on page 16</small>
There is a difference in their mode of apprehension between the mode of apprehension of the the permanent, unitary and independent person and the mode of apprehension of the self-sufficient, substantially existent person.
[Since the object of the mode of apprehension is different], therefore, there [should be] a difference in the mode of apprehension of these two minds [as well]. On this basis, examine [the difference between] an intellectually acquired affliction and an innate affliction.
In the case of an apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, there is an intellectually acquired type and an innate type. The difference between them lies in whether it is a result of a process of thinking or not.
If it is a result of thinking, then it is an intellectually acquired type; if it is not, then it is natural/ innate.

Q6a) Since the Hinayana tenets assert external phenomena exist, would that not contradict the third seal, which states that all phenomena are empty and selfless?
'All phenomena' [in that phrase] include the object of utilization of the self of person. If such a self of person does not exist, then the object of utilization, which include external phenomena that are being utilized by such a person, also do not exist.
According to the Great Exposition School and Sutra School. Any phenomena that exists, is necessarily empty of being self-sufficient, empty of such a 'self', which does not necessarily refer to a person. The 'self', here, means 'self-sufficiency'.
For these schools, when they assert the third seal's 'all phenomena being empty of self-sufficient', they take the 'self' to mean 'self-sufficiency'. Therefore, they can assert all phenomena to be empty and selfless.
When they observe a 'vase', they assert that the 'vase' lacks a 'self'/ empty of a 'self'.
Q6b) Does one need to be an inferential cognizer of the four seals before one can be a proponent of Buddhists tenets, or can one be a proponent of Buddhist tenet merely by being a correctly assuming consciousness?
It is not necessary to have an inferential cognition of the four seals to be a proponent of Buddhist tenets. However, the person should have thought [well] about [the tenet system] using logic and reasoning and have arrived at a correct assumption.
Q6c) Since a temporal moment of consciousness is impermanent and will cease to exist, how is it an ultimate truth?
KQ: Can the phenomenon, the shortest moment of consciousness, go out of existence? S: such a moment of consciousness will go out of existence at the end of its moment.
KQ: What is the basic building block of the continuum of consciousness? S: this partless moment of consciousness. KQ: if such a partless moment of consciousness ceases to exist, can there be consciousness in the first place?
Q6d) If the temporal partless moments of consciousnesses and directionally partless particles are indestructible, how does the [continua of body and mind cease to exist at the time of attaining a nirvana without remainder]?
These are the fallacies of this school.
Q7) What is the difference between compounded and un-compounded space?
What is compounded space: <i>Compounded space</i> , which is impermanent, is the <i>negation/ absence of obstructive contact</i> . This can be taken as a vacuity that one sees if there is nothing obstructing [that space]. If there is an obscuration there, then one cannot see [such a compounded space].
What is un-compounded space: <i>Uncompounded space</i> , is a phenomenon that does not arise from causes and conditions, due to it being permanent. Therefore, un-compounded space is a <i>mere negation/ absence of obstructive contact</i> .

Lesson 10

2 April 2013

Seven outlines of the Sutra School: RT page 7

<p>The explanation of the Sutra School (<i>Skt. Sautrantika</i>) has seven outlines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. definition, 2. divisions, 3. etymology, 4. way of asserting objects, 5. way of asserting object-possessors, 6. way of asserting selflessness, and 7. presentation of the grounds and paths. <p>1. Definition – The definition of a Proponent of Sutra is: a person propounding Lesser Vehicle tenets who accepts both self-cognizers and external objects. Proponent of Sutra (<i>Skt. Sautrantika</i>) and Exemplifier (<i>Skt. Darstantika</i>) are equivalent.</p>
A proponent of Sutra School is a proponent of Hinayana tenets. The difference between a proponent of Sutra School and a proponent of the Great Exposition School lies in whether one asserts self-knowers or not.
A proponent of Sutra School is a proponent of Hinayana tenets who asserts self-knowers, whereas a proponent of the Great Exposition School does not assert self-knowers.
What is a self-knower: for example, an eye consciousness apprehending blue. This consciousness has blue as its object [of observation]. [The object] blue is that which is ' <i>apprehended</i> ' [by this consciousness].
Therefore, the eye consciousness apprehending blue has the ' <i>aspect</i> ' of the apprehended'.

This eye consciousness apprehending blue has two aspects: 1) one aspect [functions to] apprehend an object other than itself, blue, therefore, it [is generated into] the <i>aspect</i> of the apprehended [blue].
2) There is also an aspect of this mind that has the potential/ power [/function] to be a mere experience, in the entity of clear and knowing, which has the ability to experience itself.
In essence, within the collection/ entity of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, there are two parts: 1) Other-knower: an <i>aspect</i> of the apprehended [blue], which has the ability to experience/realize 'blue' [an object other than itself,] 2) Self-knower: an <i>aspect</i> of the apprehender [other-knower], which has the ability to experience/ realize itself.
The reason for asserting self-knowers: The main reason for the proponent of Sutra School, and other proponents who assert self-knowers, is due to <i>memory</i> .
They assert that there must be something within the consciousness that can experience itself.
The lines of reasoning to prove self-knowers: In the case of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, there must be a part of this consciousness that experiences itself, is aware of itself.
After having experienced 'blue', it is possible, at a later time, to remember having seen 'blue'.
They assert that the only reason that one is able to <i>remember</i> having seen 'blue' is due to having experienced 'blue' previously.
Therefore, without a consciousness having experienced an object, one would not be able to remember that object later on.
Just as one can remember [the object] 'blue', due to having experienced it earlier, likewise, this is the very same reason one can apply to, in the ability to remember later, the [<i>consciousness</i> /] experience itself, that has seen [the object] 'blue'.
One could remember later about the consciousness, an eye consciousness apprehending blue, [as well as the] object itself.
The reason that one could remember this eye consciousness itself, must be [another aspect] that has experienced this eye consciousness. Due to this, self-knowers are asserted.
On the basis of such a line of reasoning, they assert that, within a collection of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, there is a part of it that is able to experience itself, without which, it is not possible to remember later, that there was an eye consciousness apprehending blue that was generated earlier.
Such lines of reasoning are [summarized] in the [logic/ debate] texts: The subject: <i>eye consciousness apprehending blue</i> The predicate: <i>has an experiencer</i> The reason: <i>because at a later time, it is possible to have a memory of this eye consciousness apprehending blue.</i>
The points of such lines of reasoning is this: a) One remembers 'blue', this is due to having seen/ experienced blue earlier. b) If one has not seen blue, one is certain that it is not possible to remember blue later. c) Since that is the case, likewise, one also remembers the 'eye <u>consciousness</u> [having apprehended] blue', d) If one has not experienced such a consciousness earlier, one would also be certain that it is not possible to remember such a consciousness later. e) Since one is able to remember this consciousness, therefore, this shows that there must be an 'experiencer' of such a consciousness. Such an 'experiencer' is called self-knower.
These are the most significant, overshadowing lines of reasoning to prove self-knowers.
Even though that is the case, this does not mean that such reasonings accord with reality. This is because, there are no self-knowers in reality.
The proponents of Sutra School, Mind Only School and the Autonomy Middle Way School assert self-knowers.
The proponents of Great Exposition School and the Consequent Middle Way School do not assert self-knowers.

Divisions, etymology and objects of the Sutra School:

2. Divisions – There are two divisions:

1. Followers of Scripture and 2. Followers of Reasoning.

An example of a Follower of Scripture is a Proponent of Sutra who follows [Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*] Treasury of Manifest Knowledge.

An example of a Follower of Reasoning is a Proponent of Sutra who follows [Dharmakirti's] Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition.

A follower of scripture is a proponent of the Sutra School who follows Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa/ Treasury of Manifest Knowledge*. They are in almost every way similar to the proponent of the Great Exposition School.

The followers of reasoning are proponents of the Sutra School who follows Dharmakirti's *Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition*.

Dharmakirti was a great logician who composed these texts, one of which is called *Pramanavarttika*, which has four chapters. It is a very difficult text, the study of which still exists today in the monasteries.

This *Pramanavarttika* is perhaps one of the most extensive text on valid cognition.

3. Etymology

Why are they called 'Proponents of Sutra'?

They are called Proponents of Sutra due to propounding tenets through following the sutras of the Bhagavan, and they are called Exemplifiers due to desiring to teach all phenomena by way of examples.

4. Way of asserting objects

The definition of existent is: that observed by a valid cognizer.

There are two types of existents: 1. conventional truths and 2. ultimate truths.

The definition of an ultimate truth is: a phenomenon that is ultimately able to perform a function.

Ultimate truth, truly existent, thing, product, impermanent phenomenon, compounded phenomenon, substance, and specifically characterized phenomenon are equivalent.

The definition of a conventional truth is: a phenomenon that is not ultimately able to perform a function.

Conventional truth, falsely existent, permanent phenomenon, and generally characterized phenomenon are equivalent.

Ultimate truth, truly existent, thing, product, impermanent phenomenon, compounded phenomenon, substance, and specifically characterized phenomenon are merely different names but are referring to the same thing.	Conventional truth, falsely existent, permanent phenomenon, uncompounded phenomenon and generally characterized phenomenon are synonyms.
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Alternate definitions of the two truths: There are also other ways to define the two truths:

1) Ultimate truth: a phenomenon that exists from its own side <i>without being merely imputed</i> by conceptuality and terms.	2) Conventional truth: a phenomenon that exists [from its own side] <i>by being merely imputed</i> by conceptuality and terms.
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Understanding the two truths by necessarily understanding the two awarenesses that apprehend them:

Mind/ awareness can be divided into: 1) ultimate mind/ awareness and 2) conventional mind/ awareness.

1) In this context, an ultimate awareness refers to a direct perceiver which is a direct valid cognizer. This awareness is necessarily a non-mistaken, non-conceptual knower.	2) A conventional awareness refers to those minds that are not direct perceivers, therefore, these are conceptual facsimiles of direct perceivers/ non-direct perceivers, <i>which are knowers that are mistaken with respect to its appearing object.</i>
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This is an ultimate awareness because it is non-mistaken. Since it is non-mistaken, therefore, it is an ultimate mind, a correct, good mind.	This is a conventional awareness because it is a mistaken mind. Since it is a mistaken mind, it obscures one from seeing the truth [directly].
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An illustration would be an eye consciousness apprehending blue.	Such a conventional awareness is also conceptual mind. Thus, a conceptual consciousness is necessarily mistaken.
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Such an awareness is a direct valid cognizer, ultimate mind and non-mistaken. It is able to directly perceive its object.	It is mistaken because, it is obscured from directly seeing the specifically characterized phenomenon.
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This is because, blue <i>exists in the way it appears</i> to this eye consciousness apprehending blue.	Therefore, it is an obscurer which obscures one from directly perceiving a specifically characterized phenomenon.
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There is an accord/ harmony, between what appears and what exists. Therefore, this mind is an ultimate awareness.	For any <i>object</i> to appear to a this consciousness, it always appears mixed with the <i>meaning generality of the object.</i>
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Since that is the case, blue is an ultimate truth. This is because, blue is true in the perspective of this ultimate mind.	Such an object cannot appear to this consciousness without being mixed with the meaning generality of the object.
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Therefore, the ' <i>ultimate</i> ' in ultimate truth refers to such an ultimate awareness.	It engages its object through the object and the medium of its meaning generality appearing as mixed.
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' <i>Truth</i> ' refers to the object, blue, which is true in the perspective of this direct valid cognizer apprehending it.	Although what appears to it is not the actual object [but is its meaning generality, such a meaning generality] appears as if it is the actual object itself. Therefore, it is mistaken.
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It is <i>true</i> because it exists in the way it appears.	For this school, an uncompounded space is a conventional truth. It is a conventional truth because it is true <i>only</i> in the perspective of a conventional/ conceptual consciousness.
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Therefore, one has to be clear about these two kinds of awarenesses: an ultimate awareness and a conventional awareness.

Here, an ultimate awareness is a direct perceiver [that is a direct valid cognizer]; and a conventional awareness is conceptual.

The explanations given so far are merely an etymology [origins of the words] and not definitions of the two truths.

How the two truths are established by its relation with its awareness:	
The definition of an ultimate truth is a phenomenon that is ultimately able to perform a function. An example is blue.	The definition of a conventional truth is a phenomenon that is not ultimately able to perform a function.
Blue is a cause, which means that it has, from its own side by its very nature, an ability to produce an effect. From the moment it comes into existence, by its own nature and from its own side, it has a potential to produce an effect.	Therefore, it is a phenomenon, which by nature/ entity, cannot produce an effect.
Therefore, impermanent phenomenon is mutually inclusive with ultimate truth.	Therefore, in this system, permanent phenomenon is mutually inclusive with conventional truth.
Here, substance is mutually inclusive with ultimate truth, which has a different meaning from the assertion of the Great Exposition School. It is defined as the potential to perform a function.	Uncompounded space is a conventional truth, because it is true only in the perspective of a conceptual consciousness which is a conventional awareness.
Therefore, an ultimate truth is essentially a functioning thing, an impermanent phenomenon.	Therefore, uncompounded space is none other than that which is merely imputed by conceptuality.
These are ultimate truths because they are true in the perspective of an ultimate awareness.	Other than [such an imputation], there is no [such uncompounded space that can exist].
Therefore, an appearing object of a direct perceiver are necessarily impermanent, functioning things.	An appearing object of a conceptual consciousness are necessarily permanent.
Therefore, the best way to understand the two truths is to see their relationships with their respective awarenesses.	

Comparing the Hinayana schools' assertions of the two truths by the way the valid cognizers apprehend them:

The two truths are asserted differently by different schools:	
The Great Exposition School asserts that a directionally partless particle is an ultimate truth. This is because, it cannot be broken up further, hence the mind cognizing/apprehending a directionally partless particle can never be ceased. Therefore, [due to the mind <i>never ceasing</i> its <i>apprehension</i> of it], the directionally partless particle is an <i>ultimate</i> truth.	The Great Exposition School asserts that a vase is a conventional truth. This is because, the mind/ valid cognizer apprehending a vase <i>can cease</i> , especially when it is destroyed. Therefore, vase is a truth only in a <i>temporal</i> sense. Since that is the case, this makes a vase a <i>conventional</i> truth.
The Sutra School asserts that an ultimate truth, unlike the conventional truth, is not something that comes about by merely being posited by conceptual awareness. Rather, an ultimate truth is a phenomenon that exists from its own side as an entity without being merely posited by conceptual mind. Therefore, all compounded phenomena like persons, vase and pillar are ultimate truths, this is because, compounded phenomena cannot be posited merely by a conceptual consciousness. Therefore, an ultimate truth can only be posited by an ultimate awareness, which is necessarily a non-mistaken consciousness/ direct valid cognizer apprehending it. Therefore, an ultimate truth cannot be posited by a conventional awareness/ mistaken mind. Therefore, a phenomenon that is posited by an ultimate awareness/ direct perceiver is an ultimate truth. Therefore, an ultimate truth is any phenomenon that, existing from its own side/ within its entity, has the potential to perform the function of producing an effect. Therefore, an ultimate truth is truly existent.	Sutra School: a conventional truth is a phenomenon that is merely posited by conceptuality/ conceptual mind/ conventional awareness imputing it. Therefore, a conventional truth exists by depending on being merely posited by conceptual consciousness. An example is uncompounded space, which cannot appear to a direct perceiver. Even though it exists, its existence [is verified by] it merely appearing to a conventional awareness/ conceptual consciousness apprehending it. Therefore, a conventional truth is any phenomenon that, existing from its own side/ within its entity, does not have the potential to perform the function of producing an effect. Therefore, a conventional truth is falsely existent. For example, uncompounded space is a mere negation of obstructive contact; and true cessation is the mere factor of abandonment of afflictions. These are merely imputed by thought and nothing more to it than this. Any phenomena whose existence cannot be posited merely by a conceptual mind would be an ultimate truth.

Assertions of selflessness and paths and grounds: RT page 13

6. Way of asserting selflessness [same as the Great Exposition School] The person being empty of being permanent, unitary, and independent is asserted to be a coarse selflessness of persons and the person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent is asserted to be the subtle selflessness of persons.
7. Presentation of the grounds and paths Since for those of all three lineages the accumulation of merit is accumulated on all four learning paths, a buddha's form aggregate is accepted to be a buddha. The presentation of the obscurations and the way of traversing the grounds and paths and so forth are similar to [the assertions of] the Proponents of the Great Exposition.

Clarifying doubts on the two truths asserted by the Sutra School (following reasoning):

1) Does the conventional mind also include wrong consciousness? KR: yes [a conventional mind does not necessarily apprehend only conventional truths, as it can also apprehend non-existents like sky-flowers and self-sufficient person].
2a) What does 'imputation by terms' mean in the [alternate] definition of conventional truth?
For example, uncompounded space, firstly, the <i>term</i> 'uncompounded space' arises, then there is a conceptual consciousness apprehending such a <i>concept/ idea</i> , then one comes to <i>understand</i> uncompounded space.
One may also think of many things, [these came about] firstly with an <i>concept/ idea</i> , then a term may come, [by which] one affixes a name to the concept.
2b) The object of a conventional awareness is mixed with the meaning generality, could [an object] be mixed with a sound generality also?
It is for the sake of understanding that merely meaning generality [was explained]. The conceptual consciousness engages its object through the object and the mental image of the object mixed up as one.
Some scholars also assert “apprehending the sound and meaning generality as suitable to be mixed.” Therefore, [in such a case,] instead of seeing [these two] as separate, [for the sake of simplicity], just think of them as meaning generality.
There is a difference between a direct perceiver and the conceptual consciousness in terms of the mode/ way/ how these two engage their [respective] objects: unlike 1) a direct perceiver which directly perceives an object, 2) a conceptual consciousness has to engage an object via a medium of the mental image of the object.
3a) Are directionally partless particles and temporal partless moments of consciousnesses ultimate truths in the Sutra School?
They are ultimately able to perform functions. A directionally partless particle is necessarily form, a temporal partless moment of consciousness is necessarily consciousness. Both are necessarily composed/ impermanent phenomenon. Therefore, these [characteristics] make them ultimate truths. For this school, an ultimate truth and impermanent phenomenon are mutually inclusive.
3b) However, uncompounded space do perform a function to enable objects to move, so one cannot really say that whatever that performs a function is an ultimate truth?
Uncompounded space cannot perform any functions, whereas [compounded] space performs the function of enabling objects to be moved. The vacuity that is the object of the eye consciousness is impermanent [compounded space]. However, an uncompounded space is a [mental] construct, therefore, it cannot be perceived by an eye consciousness. Therefore, uncompounded space is something which is merely posited by conceptuality, a <i>mere</i> negation of obstructive contact [which does not affirm that there is necessarily a compounded space in that spot.]
3c) Are true cessations ultimate truths?
For this school, since true cessation is asserted to be permanent, therefore, it is a conventional truth. The Autonomy Middle Way School also asserts that true cessation is a conventional truth. Whereas, the Mind Only School and the Consequent Middle Way School assert true cessations to be ultimate truths.
4) For the two Hinayana schools, is the innate apprehension of the self of person a non-conceptual mind whereas the intellectually acquired apprehension of the self of person a conceptual mind?
If you assert that the innate apprehension of a self is non-conceptual, then of the two, is it a sense or a mental consciousness?
It can never be a sense consciousness, therefore, it can only be a mental consciousness. Within mental consciousness, there are conceptual and non-conceptual.
Of the three divisions of mental direct perceivers, mental direct perceiver which is a: 1) valid cognizer 2) subsequent cognizer 3) awareness to which an object appears but is not ascertained, an innate apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person cannot be any of these three, [because these minds are necessarily unmistaken.]
[Since it is not a sense consciousness nor a mental direct perceiver, that is, it cannot be a non-mistaken non-conceptual consciousness], therefore, it can only be a facsimile of a mental direct perceiver [mistaken consciousness].
Since you have asserted that it is a non-conceptual mind, then, within this division of being conceptual and non-conceptual, it can only be a facsimile of a mental direct perceiver which is non-conceptual. Within this, there can only be a non-conceptual facsimile of a mental direct perceiver that is either in the dream state or waking state.
Since, by eliminating these possibilities [of being non-conceptual], one can then posit that an <i>innate apprehension of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person is a conceptual mind.</i>
Likewise, an apprehension of a permanent, unitary and independent self is also conceptual. Both of these apprehensions are wrong consciousnesses.
Between the division of conceptual wrong consciousnesses and non-conceptual wrong consciousnesses, these two apprehensions of a self are conceptual wrong consciousnesses.

Seven outlines of the Mind Only School: RT page 14

The explanation of the Mind Only School (*Skt. Cittamatra*) has seven outlines, as before.

1. Definition

The definition of a Proponent of Mind Only is: a person propounding Great Vehicle tenets who does not accept external objects but does assert truly existent self-cognizers.

Proponents of Great Exposition School and Sutra School assert external objects to be truly [established.]

However, a proponent of Mind Only School does not assert external objects, but like the Sutra School, asserts self-knowers to be truly existent.

Meaning of external objects as asserted by the Sutra School:

Proponents Sutra School assert partless particle, which is the basis of aggregation. Through the aggregation of these particles, a gross form/ object is formed. This then becomes the object that is apprehended by a sense consciousness.

According to the Sutra School, 1) firstly, there must exist an object, a gross form, only then would there be a 2) sense consciousness apprehending it. Therefore, in terms of form, the object comes first before the subject is able to apprehend it.

Therefore, this is how a sense consciousness apprehending form is generated: it is generated only after the form itself comes into existence. Such a gross form comes into existence through the aggregation of directionally partless particle.

Meaning of form as asserted by the Mind Only School: However, the proponent of Mind Only School refutes this:

Even though they assert form, they do not accept *external form*. What form is, is none other than that which is the *same entity* with consciousness. They do not assert a form that is of a different entity/ nature from the mind. Therefore, no external form.

What is form: Therefore, form is none other than the factor of appearance that appears to consciousness as [aspect of] form.

What is external form: Therefore, *external form* is a different/ separate entity from the mind, which they *refute*.

The use of examples to state how forms are mere entities of mind:

1) *Appearances [/forms] in a dream:* in a dream, there are myriad appearances, however, such appearances are not external to the mind/ separate from the dream consciousness but is essentially mind itself.

Likewise, there is form, which is none other than the factor of appearance to the consciousness.

2) *Appearance of two moons:* while in reality there is only one moon, there can be an appearance of two moons. Such an appearance is not something that exists outside the mind. While there can be an appearance of two moons, which do not exist outside the mind, such an appearance is essentially an appearance to the mind [only].

3) *Different appearances on the same base of liquid in a cup:* to humans, the liquid appears through the force of karma as water, which is a mere factor of appearance to the mind. There is not an external water out there that is of a different entity to the mind. There is not an external phenomenon that can exist without depending on the mind.

When a hungry ghost sees the same cup of liquid, they do not have the appearance of water [due to their karma]. What they see is pus. Therefore, this shows that there is not an external object 'out there' that is of a separate entity from the mind.

Due to different imprints, different beings [can] see different objects [on the same base]. There is no external water.

What humans see as water in the cup, appears as nectar to the gods and molten iron to the hell beings.

Therefore, the proponent of Mind Only School asserts that, for humans, that water in a cup is a mere factor of appearance to the mind, there is no 'external water' out there.

4) *Different appearances on different bases:* one also sees one's home, body and clothes as attractive and pleasant. Therefore, one has an appearance of pleasant house, body and possessions.

However, for this school, while one has a pleasant house and so on that appears to one, there isn't a pleasant house that exist externally as a separate/ different entity from the mind.

This is because, when the gods see one's house, body or possessions, they only see disgusting things.

A pig living in its stile eats, excretes and sleeps all in the same place. It is in fact, rather satisfied in it. However, when one sees that, it is utterly disgusting, one would not even [wish to be near it].

Therefore, the way the gods view one's house, body and possessions is similar to how one would regard a pig stile.

Just as a human has an appearance of a pleasant house, body and possessions, for a human, these are what exist. One cannot say that these do not exist. Likewise, for the pig, there is an appearance of a pleasant pig stile that exists.

Therefore, one cannot be certain that the pig is solely mistaken [with respect to its appearance] and one is not.

It is the same with the liquid in the cup: it appears as water to humans and pus to hungry ghosts. One cannot say that the water that appears to humans is the <i>only</i> truth.
What <i>appears</i> as water to humans <i>exists</i> as water, however, this is not the only truth. For a hungry ghost, what <i>appears</i> is pus and it <i>exists</i> as pus to them.
Therefore, this shows that what exists as pus and what exists as water is none other than the mere factor of appearance to a human and a hungry ghost respectively.
Such an appearance as water to humans is due to the ripening of karmic propensities/ ripening of karma. Likewise, the appearance of pus to the hungry ghost is due to the ripening of its karma. In this sense, both appearances are not mistaken.
5) <i>Different appearances on the same base of a person</i> : a person's enemy has one view/ appearance of him; his friend would have a different view/ appearance from the enemy; a stranger would also have a completely different view of him as well.
Such a person is viewed differently by three different persons, who are all viewing the same object, person.
Therefore, this again shows that there is no external enemy. How enemy exists is merely an appearance to the mind.
Based on these reasons, the proponent of Mind Only School does not accept external objects. They assert that everything that exists is in the nature of mind, the appearances to the mind are nothing but mere awakening of latencies/ imprints.
When the imprints ripen, one would have all such different appearances/ phenomena. Therefore, they are essentially appearances of the mind.
Since that is the case, the mind is truly existent. This means, the self-knower is also truly existent.

The use of examples to refute qualms to factors of appearance:

The proponent of Mind Only School asserts that form and the consciousness apprehending it are produced simultaneously and not serially. The apprehended object and the subject apprehending it come into being at the same time.
They do not assert that any object is separated from mind, as everything is in the nature of mind.
<i>Qualm</i> : Since that is the case, how does one posit an object that is apprehended by the consciousness?
<i>Reply</i> : They give an example of an illusionist conjuring an illusory elephant. Although there is an appearance of elephant, however, there is no real elephant outside. What this elephant is, is merely a factor of appearance to the mind.
Nevertheless, when such an illusory elephant is conjured, there can be an eye consciousness apprehending illusory elephant.
When an illusory elephant is conjured, what it is, is merely that appearance [of an illusory elephant] to the mind.
Although there is an appearance to the mind, nevertheless, an eye consciousness apprehending it is still generated.
<i>Qualm</i> : If external objects do not exist, then how do main minds and mental factors arise?
<i>Reply</i> : They give an example of a mirage. Although a mirage [of an object like water] appears, there is no real [object/ water] out there, other than what is appearing to the mind.
Even though for this school, external objects do not exist, they assert that ordinary beings have such <i>appearances</i> , and <i>believe</i> in such appearances of external objects.
<i>Qualm</i> : How then, does one account for the appearances of external objects?
<i>Reply</i> : Although there is no external object, due to the mind being polluted by the latencies of ignorance, such an appearance of an external object to the mind appears to exist.
They give an example of 'falling hairs' [/floaters]. While in reality there are no hairs falling, there can still be such an appearance. Likewise, while in reality there are no external objects, this does not mean that there can be no appearances of external objects. Such appearances occur due to mistaken [consciousnesses].

Asserting the basis by way of the three natures: RT page 15

Mind Only School can assert the basis [established base] with respect to the two truths, they also assert the basis/ phenomena by way of the three natures: Thoroughly established nature, Other-powered nature and Imputational nature.
1) How composed phenomena are other-powered:
a) Due to it being dependent on causality: Other-powered nature refers to composed phenomena. It is other-powered because composed phenomena cannot arise by depending on itself, thus it is not self-powered.
Composed phenomena come into being by depending on causes and conditions, therefore, they are other-powered.
Due to such assertions of Other-powered nature, some proponents of Mind Only School assert the collections of eight consciousnesses: the five sense and one mental consciousnesses, an afflicted consciousness and a mind-basis-of-all.
The mind-basis-of-all is asserted to be the repository/ holder of all the imprints, where all the imprints are deposited.

Through the awakening of these imprints deposited on such a mind-basis-of-all, composed phenomena come into existence.
This is how composed phenomena are other-powered [in dependence on causality.]
b) Due to it being impermanent: The moment a composed phenomenon come into being, it cannot exist beyond that moment, it remains as long as the first moment of coming into being. In the next moment, it disintegrates.
Therefore, composed phenomena have no power to remain for more than a moment.
In essence, Other-powered nature refers to composed phenomena, which are under the power/ control of their own causes.
2) Thoroughly established nature/ emptiness/ ultimate truth, has two divisions:
a) Selflessness of persons: the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.
b) Selflessness of phenomena: the emptiness of subject and object as different entities.
[An emptiness/ ultimate truth] is called a Thoroughly established nature because, it will never change its aspect into something else, it is thoroughly established as it is. This is not a definition but merely an etymology [reason for its origin].
3) Imputational nature: phenomena that are established by being merely imputed by the conceptual consciousness/ conceptuality that apprehends it.
For example, uncompounded space: it is an Imputational nature because, uncompounded space does not exist by way of its own character. It is merely a factor of superimposition/ imputation by conceptuality.

Modes of existence of three natures and how they are subsumed by the two truths: RT page 15

Here, established base are divided into the three natures, when these are subsumed under the two truths, then Thoroughly established nature would be the ultimate truth, Other-powered nature and Imputational nature would be conventional truths.
Thoroughly established nature and Other-powered nature are truly existent/ truly established/ established by way of its own character/ exist by way of its own character.
Imputational nature are not truly existent/ not truly established/ not established by way of its own character/ not exist by way of its own character.
However, all three natures are inherent existent, exist from their own side.

Comparison of assertions between the Mind Only School and Sutra School:

Mind Only School	Sutra School
Refutes external objects, asserts truly existent self-knowers	Asserts external objects and self-knowers

Divisions of the Mind Only School:

<p>2. Divisions - There are two divisions:</p> <p>1. Mind Only True Aspectarians (<i>Skt. Satyakaravadin</i>) and 2. Mind Only False Aspectarians (<i>Skt. Alikakaravadin</i>).</p> <p>The definition of a Mind Only True Aspectarian is: a Proponent of Mind Only who asserts that the factor of appearance as a gross form to a direct perceiver apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being is <i>not</i> polluted by the latencies of ignorance.</p> <p>The definition of a Mind Only False Aspectarian is: a Proponent of Mind Only who asserts that the factor of appearance as a gross form to a direct perceiver apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being is polluted by the latencies of ignorance.</p>
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Common assertions of the two Aspectarians: mode of apprehension of external form -
Both assert there [can be] appearances as gross forms to [all] the sense consciousnesses apprehending [such external objects] to be *distant* from the sense consciousnesses. In essence, there is an appearance of [*externally established*] form.

Essential differences between the True and False Aspectarians:	
True Aspectarians assert that such an appearance of the gross form to the sense consciousness apprehending it is <i>not</i> polluted by the latencies of ignorance [it is unmitaken].	False Aspectarians assert that such an appearance of the gross form to the sense consciousness apprehending it <i>is</i> polluted by the latencies of ignorance [it is mistaken].
1) For example, the <u>factor of appearance of 'external blue'</u> is due to the mind being polluted by latencies of ignorance.	1) For example, the <u>factor of appearance of 'external blue'</u> is due to the mind being polluted by latencies of ignorance.
2) However, the <u>factor of appearance of blue as [the term] 'blue'</u> is <i>not</i> polluted by latencies of ignorance.	2) However, the <u>factor of appearance of blue as [the term] 'blue'</u> <i>is</i> also polluted by latencies of ignorance.
3) Likewise, the <u>factor of appearance of gross blue</u> is also <i>not</i> polluted by latencies of ignorance.	3) Likewise, the <u>factor of appearance of gross blue</u> <i>is</i> also polluted by latencies of ignorance.

Reasons for asserting their differences:	
The reason that the factor of appearance of gross blue <i>not</i> being polluted by latencies of ignorance is because, gross blue <i>exists</i> as gross blue [<i>exists</i> in the way it appears].	The reason that the factor of appearance of gross blue <i>being</i> polluted by latencies of ignorance is because gross blue does <i>not exist</i> as gross blue [<i>does not exist</i> in the way it appears].
Likewise, the factor of appearance of blue [as the term] 'blue' <i>not</i> being polluted by latencies of ignorance is also because [the term] 'blue' <i>exists</i> as blue [<i>exists</i> in the way it appears].	The factor of appearance of blue [as the term] 'blue' <i>being</i> polluted by latencies of ignorance is due to [the term] 'blue' <i>not existing</i> as blue [<i>does not exist</i> in the way it appears].
True Aspectarians	False Aspectarians
Factor of appearance of 'external blue' is <i>mistaken</i>	Factor of appearance of 'external blue' is <i>mistaken</i>
Factor of appearance of gross blue is <i>non-mistaken</i>	Factor of appearance of gross blue is <i>mistaken</i>
Factor of appearance of blue as 'blue' is <i>non-mistaken</i>	Factor of appearance of blue as 'blue' is <i>mistaken</i>
SQ: Are the factors of appearance of blue as a gross form and blue as the term 'blue' for the True Aspectarians an <i>Other-powered nature of the conventional truth</i> ? Also, are the factors of appearance of blue as a gross form and blue as the term 'blue' for the False Aspectarians a <i>non-existent Imputational nature</i> ?	
KR: It seems that the True Aspectarians assert gross form whereas the False Aspectarians do not assert gross form:	
In the root text (page 16): <i>According to the True Aspectarians, even though the five sense objects – forms and so forth – are not external objects they are accepted to exist as gross objects.</i> <i>According to the False Aspectarians, the five sense objects – forms and so forth – are not gross objects because if they were gross objects they would necessarily be external objects.</i>	
Therefore, from here, one can say that, for the True Aspectarians, the factor of appearance of gross blue and the factor of appearance of [the term] 'blue' as blue, can be asserted to be an Other-powered nature.	
Whereas for the False Aspectarians, due to them not asserting gross form, one cannot say that [these two factors of appearance: gross blue and the term 'blue'] are Other-powered nature.	
SQ: The non-existent Imputational nature is subsumed under Imputational nature by way of terms but not a fully qualified conventional truth. It is not a conventional truth because it is non-existent. Why is it included here but not outside of established base?	
KR: The earlier explanation on the Imputational nature refers to phenomena that comes into existence [exists from its own side] by being merely imputed by conceptual consciousness.	
Such an explanation of an existent Imputational nature by itself is not a definition of Imputational nature [as a whole].	
In general, Imputational nature is that which is merely imputed by conceptual consciousness. However, whatever is merely imputed by mind does not necessarily exist.	
This is because, there are Imputational nature that are existents and there are also Imputational nature that are non-existents.	
Therefore, Imputational natures that are existents would be subsumed under conventional truths. Whereas those Imputational natures that do not exist, then these are not subsumed under any of the two truths as these are non-existents.	
This is because, phenomena that are subsumed under the two truths have to be existents.	

The essence of Mind Only School:

A proponent of Mind Only School essentially propounds that all phenomena is in the <i>nature of mind</i> . However, for one, things appear to exist as separate entities/ separate natures to the mind, as something outside [the sphere of the mind.]
Essentially, what appears to one are <i>external objects</i> .
Although there is an appearance of an external object to one, [for the Mind Only School,] external objects do not exist.
Therefore, although objects that are of a different entity/ nature from the mind do not exist, nevertheless, they appear.
The reason that [such external objects] appear is due to the mind being completely habituated to ignorance.
Due to the force of ignorance, the latencies of such ignorance are placed on the mind.
Due to such latencies of ignorance, [there is the result of] the projection/ appearance of external objects.

Comparison of the assertions of 'external object' between Sutra School and Mind Only School:

Proponents of Sutra School assert that, to an eye consciousness apprehending form, there is an appearance of external form which is valid/ correct. This is because, in reality, this is how form exists [form exists in the way it appears].	Whereas for the proponent of Mind Only School , the appearance of external form [to a direct perceiver] does not represent how form actually exists. Although external form appears, it does not exist. The reason for such an appearance is due to the latencies of ignorance in the mind which, in turn, is due to a thorough familiarity/ involvement of the mind with ignorance [from time without beginning].
To the proponents of Sutra School, an eye consciousness apprehending form induces a conceptual consciousness thinking/ labeling “This is form.” Such an appearance of external form to this conceptual consciousness exists as a <i>natural base of engagement/ natural referent of names</i> . 1) Therefore, external form appears as a natural basis of referent of the term 'form' from the side of the object. 2) On top of that, such an appearance exists in the way it appears, from its own side, as a natural engagement/ natural referent for the term 'form'.	However, the proponents of Mind Only School refute this: although form <i>appears</i> from its own side as a natural base of engagement/ natural referent of the term “form” [to a conceptual consciousness], such an appearance is invalid. This is because, form <i>does not exist</i> from its own side, as a natural referent/ natural base of engagement of the term 'form' [if it is not merely imputed by conceptuality]. Rather, form [<i>does exist from its own side,</i>] as the natural referent, natural base of engagement of the term 'form' by it being merely imputed by conceptuality.
Proponents Sutra School assert external objects, such objects are not in the nature of mind.	Proponents of Mind Only School differ greatly to this, that everything is in the nature of mind. This is because, phenomena arise due to the awakening of karmic propensities/ seeds of karma that were infused in the mind.

Between the Great Exposition and Sutra Schools, how consciousnesses are 'not aspected' and 'aspected':

The proponents of the Great Exposition School assert that a sense consciousness engages its object nakedly without an intervening <i>aspect</i> between the object and the consciousness apprehending it.
Therefore, they do not assert that consciousnesses are generated in the aspects [images] of their objects.
Since that is the case, objects and subjects have to exist simultaneously, albeit being different substances.
Therefore, they assert simultaneous cause and effect [relationships].
With the exception of the Great Exposition School, all other Buddhist tenets assert that consciousnesses are generated in the aspects of the objects that they apprehend, consciousnesses are ' <i>aspected</i> '.
For example, an eye consciousness apprehending blue is generated in the aspect of blue.
The proponents of Sutra School, asserting external objects, assert that such an aspect of blue is <i>cast from the side of the object</i> , blue. Due to that, an [eye] consciousness apprehending blue is generated into the aspect of blue.
Therefore, the eye consciousness apprehending blue is generated in dependence on blue. Therefore, blue has to exist prior to the production of an eye consciousness apprehending blue.
In dependence on blue, from the side of this blue, an aspect of blue is cast, due to which, an eye consciousness apprehending blue is generated.
Therefore, for this school, an object must exist <i>prior to</i> the subject [before the subject] can apprehend its object.

Therefore, the reason why they assert that 'blue appears clearly' to the eye consciousness apprehending blue is due to the <i>aspect</i> of blue is appearing clearly to the eye consciousness apprehending it.		
However, it is unsure for this school, whether the <u>eye consciousness</u> apprehending blue and the ' <u>aspect</u> ' of blue are of one substance or not.		
What is clear is: 1) <u>blue</u> and the <u>eye consciousness</u> apprehending blue are different substances. 2) Blue and eye consciousness apprehending blue do not exist simultaneously but respectively in sequence.		
Sutra School: Sequence of generation of eye consciousness apprehending blue		
Object exists first	Therefore, it is uncertain that <i>aspect</i> and <i>consciousness</i> can be of one substance	<i>Object and consciousness</i> are different substances
Aspect of object is then cast		
Consciousness is then generated into the aspect of object		

How the Mind Only School asserts consciousnesses to be 'aspected':

Like the Sutra School, the Mind Only School also asserts that an eye consciousness apprehending blue is generated into the aspect of blue.	
Unlike the Sutra School, this school does not assert that such an aspect is 'cast' form the side of the [external] object.	
Rather, such an <i>aspect</i> of blue is generated in dependence on the awakening of karmic seeds/ propensities.	
Therefore, putting the two together: 1) Being a Mind Only School tenet means that all phenomena are in the <i>nature of mind</i> , and, 2) the aspect of an object appearing to the consciousness is generated in dependence on the <i>awakening of karmic seeds</i> :	
Then, the conclusion is that: the <i>aspect</i> of blue is <i>blue</i> [itself].	
Mind Only School: Sequence of generation of eye consciousness apprehending blue	
Firstly, there is the ripening of karmic seeds	Therefore, aspect and object are the same: aspect <i>is</i> the object
Then, aspect of object appearing simultaneously to the consciousness is generated	

Elaborations on the difference between the True Aspectarians and the False Aspectarians:

The two Aspectarians agree that the sense consciousnesses in the continua of ordinary beings possess the appearance of external objects, [such an appearance are agreed by both to be mistaken, because it does not exist in the way it appears].	
For example, in the continuum of an ordinary being, there can be a direct perceiver of an eye consciousness apprehending blue. One can say that this eye consciousness is a mistaken consciousness.	
This is because, such a consciousness has an appearance of external blue, [which, to the Mind Only School, does not exist, even though it appears].	
However, what a gross object is, is not really clear. One explanation is this: when one sees blue, the appearance of such a color can appear very vividly to one's eye consciousness. Such an appearance of blue is asserted to be a gross object.	
Such a manner of the appearance of gross blue is not something different/ separate from/ is none other than the appearance of blue as blue. For the ease of understanding, the appearance of blue as blue will be explained:	
<p>The definition of a Mind Only True Aspectarian is: a Proponent of Mind Only who asserts that the factor of appearance as a gross form to a direct perceiver apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being is <i>not</i> polluted by the latencies of ignorance.</p> <p>For the True Aspectarians, [within this appearance of external blue] to the eye consciousness apprehending blue, there is a factor of appearance of blue as blue.</p> <p>Such a factor of appearance of blue as blue is <i>unmistaken</i>.</p> <p>This is because, such a factor of appearance of blue as blue exists in the way it appears.</p> <p>This is because, such a factor of appearance of blue as blue <i>does not appear as an external blue</i>.</p> <p>Likewise, the factor of appearance of blue as gross object is <i>unmistaken</i> as well [for the same reason.]</p>	<p>The definition of a Mind Only False Aspectarian is: a Proponent of Mind Only who asserts that the factor of appearance as a gross form to a direct perceiver apprehending form in the continuum of an ordinary being <i>is</i> polluted by the latencies of ignorance.</p> <p>For the False Aspectarians, [within this appearance of external blue] to the eye consciousness apprehending blue, there is a factor of appearance of blue as blue.</p> <p>Such a factor of appearance of blue as blue is <i>mistaken</i>.</p> <p>This is because, such a factor of appearance of blue as blue does not exist in the way it appears.</p> <p>This is because, such a factor of appearance of blue as blue is <i>appearing as an external blue</i>.</p> <p>Likewise, the factor of appearance of blue as gross object is also <i>mistaken</i> as well [for the same reason.]</p>

Divisions of True Aspectarians: RT page 14:

There are three types of True Aspectarians:

1. Proponents of an Equal Number of Apprehendeds and Apprehenders,
2. Half-Eggists, and
3. Non-Pluralists.

Each has their own individual assertions.

It is said that the Proponents of an Equal Number of Apprehendeds and Apprehenders assert that when an eye consciousness apprehending the mottled colors on the wing of a butterfly apprehends the mottle, from the object's side the aspect of each different color – blue, yellow, and so on – is [generated], and also from the subject's side the aspect of each different color – blue, yellow, and so on – is produced in its true aspect.

It is said that the Half-Eggists assert that when such is apprehended, from the object's side the aspect of each different color – blue, yellow, and so on – is [generated], however from the subject's side the aspect of each different color – blue, yellow, and so on – is produced in an aspectless manner.

It is said that the Non-Pluralists assert that when such is apprehended, from the object's side the aspect of each different color – blue, yellow, and so on – is not [generated], but rather the aspect of the mere conglomeration is [generated]; and from the subject's side the aspect of each different color – blue, yellow, and so on – is not produced in an aspectless manner, but rather the aspect of the mere conglomeration is produced in an aspectless manner.

1. Proponents of an Equal Number of Apprehendeds and Apprehenders assert:
The number of aspects [generated] = the number of consciousnesses [produced]

Therefore, such an assertion is the same as the assertions of Sutra School, the difference is that external objects are asserted:

From the side of the [external] object, [which is an established base for Sutra School], however many aspects of the object are cast to the eye consciousnesses apprehending them, there are that same number of consciousnesses that are produced.

However, the difference with the Mind Only School is that, the aspects are not cast from the side of the object [but generated as a result of ripening of karmic seeds.]

The example given is a mottle [which is an irregular arrangement of spots or patches of color]: Just as there are that many number of [aspects of] colors of the mottle on the wings of a butterfly [being generated], likewise, there are an equal number of consciousnesses [being produced] that apprehend these colors.

Within this group of proponents, there are [two divisions]:

- a) Those asserting consciousnesses apprehending the aspects are [produced] *serially*.
- b) Those asserting consciousnesses apprehending the aspects are [produced] *simultaneously*.

2. Half-Eggists [according to Jang-gya Rol-bay-dor-jay's Presentation of Tenets, which is different from the root text]:

From the [objects being generated], the aspects of those colors [of the mottle] are not [generated], rather, the aspect of the [collective] mottle is [generated]. From the subject [produced], the consciousness is [produced] into the aspect of apprehending the [collective] mottle and not apprehending the various colors that make up the mottle. In this sense, it is 'half-half'. An aspect of the mere mottle is [generated], a consciousness apprehending such a mere mottle is [produced].

In essence: **One aspect [generated], one consciousness [produced]**.

3. Non-Pluralists: From the [objects being generated], there are many aspects, however, there is only one consciousness being [produced]. Such a consciousness is [produced/ generated] into those aspects.

In essence: **Many aspects are [generated], one consciousness is [produced]** that apprehends the collective mottle.

In general, the non-pluralists' assertions are [favored over the other two.]

For an eye consciousness apprehending blue, all the [specific characteristics of blue's impermanence, blue being a product, etc.] that are the same in establishment and abiding with blue, appear to this eye consciousness.

Even though all these specific characteristics *appear* to the eye consciousness that apprehends blue, nevertheless, the eye consciousness is only *generated* into the aspect of blue [alone], not all its specific characteristics.

SQ: For the [Equal Number True Aspectarians], how do they assert that many consciousnesses can arise simultaneously?

KR: There are many consciousnesses that can arise simultaneously. Consciousnesses can arise serially or simultaneously.

SQ: Is it possible that, if there are 1000 aspects [being generated] from the mottle, 1000 eye consciousnesses can apprehend them simultaneously?

KR: Take the example of this [teaching] hall, there are maybe 50 people in it. Do I see everybody or not? Do I see the entire group [of people in this hall] or do I merely see 10 people? So, if I do see 10 people, can 10 consciousnesses arise at the same time or not? This example can be related to [your question].

SQ: For the [Equal Number of consciousnesses] that [are produced] serially, is one aspect simultaneously [generated] with one consciousness, sets of these are then generated serially?

KR: An awakening of karmic seeds produce both aspect and consciousness apprehending it. Such are then serially produced.

SQ: For this school, on top of Buddha's sense consciousnesses being unmistakable, the Superiors' sense consciousnesses are also unmistakable. How do they explain the latter being unmistakable without being Buddhas?

KR: There is disagreement among scholars, as to whether the sense consciousnesses in the continua of Superior beings are mistaken or not. Some assert that all sense consciousnesses in the continua of sentient beings are necessarily mistaken, this would then include the Superiors.

To understand the Mind Only School, three important questions to ponder:

1) According to the Mind Only School, for a vase on the table, does everybody see the same vase? Is there one common vase that is appearing to all who are looking at it?

2) Is it possible to have a mind that can directly perceive another's mind?

3) Does Buddha see the specifically characterized 'hell fire'?

Hell fire definitely exists. Whatever exists is necessarily realized/ apprehended by Buddha. Hell fire is essentially an appearance of the mind, such an appearance is produced from a specific karmic seed. Since the gods do not see a cup of liquid as water but as nectar, then does the Buddha see hell fire?

The central tenet of the Mind Only School is that, all phenomena that are experienced are the result of the awakening of karmic latencies in the mind. Therefore, all phenomena are essentially one substance/ one nature with the mind.

For this school, in an eye consciousness apprehending blue, both the subject 'eye consciousness' and the object 'blue' are produced in dependence of the awakening of *one* karmic imprint, which is the substantial cause for both object and subject.

One part of this imprint produces the eye consciousness apprehending blue, whereas another part of this imprint produces the object blue.

Therefore, this is what is meant in the Mind Only School when they assert that everything is produced in dependence on the awakening of karmic imprints.

For this reason, therefore, they assert that object and subject are empty of being separate entities.

This means that, for example, blue and the eye consciousness apprehending blue are produced simultaneously.

Therefore, for this school, the *emptiness of object and subject as different entities* is the *selflessness of phenomena*.

Even though everything is established in the *entity of mind*, however, this does not mean that everything is *mind*.

This is because, there is a [mere] difference between *mind* and *entity/ nature of mind*.

Therefore, one cannot say that 'blue' is consciousness, 'everything' is consciousness. One can say, however, that blue is established as the *entity of mind*.

On this basis, ponder on the 3 questions.

Etymologies of the Three Natures:

According to the Mind Only School, all phenomena can be included into the Three Natures: Thoroughly established nature, Other-powered nature, Imputational nature.
Etymology of Other-powered nature:
Other-powered nature, impermanent phenomenon, compounded phenomenon, composed phenomenon are synonymous.
The main characteristic of such a phenomenon is that, it undergoes momentary change.
This is due to the cause that brought about the phenomenon. Therefore, it is under the power of the causes that produced it. Since that is the case, it is 'other-powered'.
Therefore, such an etymology serves to aid understanding in the characteristics of impermanent, composed phenomena.
Etymology of Thoroughly established nature:
In this school, Thoroughly established nature, emptiness, ultimate truth are synonymous.
[Examples of] emptinesses are: The emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, the emptiness of subject and object as different entities, the emptiness of phenomena as natural bases of engagement or referent of names.
[Such examples] of emptinesses are Thoroughly established natures.
In essence, Thoroughly established nature is emptiness, which has two division: the emptiness of a self of person and the emptiness of a self of phenomena.
Etymology of Imputational nature:
There are Imputational natures that are existents and non-existents.
Imputational natures that are <i>existents</i> refer to all <i>permanent</i> phenomena other than emptiness. E.g. uncompounded space.
Examples of Imputational natures that are <i>non-existents</i> are external objects. This school asserts that external objects do not exist. Nevertheless, there can be a <i>conception</i> of external objects, which is an imputation through the force of conceptuality.
Another example is: sky-flower, which does not exist. Even though it does not exist, it can still be imputed by conceptuality.
True and non-true establishments of the Three natures:
Of the Three natures, Thoroughly established natures and Other-powered natures are truly established, whereas Imputational natures are not truly established.
How the Three natures are subsumed by the two truths:
This school asserts that emptiness is ultimate truth. Since that is the case, then every other existent phenomena would be conventional truths.
This means, of the Three natures, Thoroughly established nature is an ultimate truth, whereas Other-powered nature and existent Imputational nature are conventional truths.

How the Mahayana tenets have their own assertions of the selflessness of phenomena:

The Mahayana tenet systems of the Mind Only School and the Middle Way School assert the selflessness of phenomena. However, they differ as to what it is.
According to the Middle Way School , they assert that the way/ manner/ mode that things and events appear are <i>not true</i> .
When things and events appear, they appear as if they are the: way the objects actually exist/ final nature/ ultimate nature of the objects and nothing more beyond that.
The way phenomenon appears is as if it is exactly the nature of the object, how it actually exists, as if it is the final mode of abiding of the object.
Appearances/ things and events appear to the mind as if these are how they exist finally, ultimately, the actual 'face' without any 'mask'. This is how things and events appear, as if they are the real and final nature of the objects.
However, if this is how phenomena exist, if one accepts this is how an object exists, then it would mean that the object would have to be <i>ultimately established/ truly established, exist/ established in the way it appears</i> .
If that is the case, then such a phenomenon would have to exist in the perspective of an ultimate awareness, an ultimate awareness that posits the ultimate truth, specifically, the wisdom directly realizing emptiness.
In essence, if phenomena existed in the way it appears, they would have to exist in the perspective of the wisdom directly realizing emptiness.

When one analyzes logically according to the Middle Way School, [one would discover] that phenomena are not truly established, not ultimately established.
This is merely the general presentation of the Middle Way School, which has two divisions.
The explanations of the highest view, the Consequent Middle Way School, are even more subtle.
According to them, everything is <i>mere name</i> , everything exists as <i>merely imputed by mind</i> .

Lesson 14

16 April 2013

Divisions of False Aspectarians: Root text page 15

There are two types of False Aspectarians: 1. Tainted False Aspectarians and 2. Untainted False Aspectarians.
In the Mind Only School, there can be the two divisions of: proponents of the Mind Only School True Aspectarians and Mind Only School False Aspectarians.
The Mind Only School True Aspectarians are of three types.
The Mind Only School False Aspectarians are of two types: Tainted False Aspectarians and Untainted False Aspectarians.
Tainted False Aspectarians: Assert that the <i>nature of the mind</i> is tainted by the stains of dualistic appearance.
They assert that there is dualistic appearance on the Buddha ground. This means Buddhas have dualistic appearances.
For example, yellow, blue and so on appear to Buddhas, therefore, there are mistaken appearances on the Buddha ground. However, they assert that Buddhas are not mistaken, even though there are mistaken and dualistic appearances.
Untainted False Aspectarians: Assert that the <i>nature of the mind</i> is not tainted by the stains of dualistic appearances.
This sub-school asserts that the nature of the mind is not polluted by the afflictions, rather, the afflictions are adventitious.
This means that the afflictions have not entered into the recesses of the mind/ not in the nature of the mind.
They assert that on the Buddha ground, there are no dualistic appearances, there are no appearances of blue, yellow and so on
In essence, the difference between the Tainted and Untainted False Aspectarians lies in whether the nature of the mind is polluted by the <i>stains of dualistic appearances</i> or not.

Etymology and assertions of the two truths:

<p>3. Etymology Why are they called ‘Proponents of Mind Only’? They are called Proponents of Mind Only because they assert that phenomena are merely the nature of mind, and they are called Proponents of Cognition because they assert that all phenomena are merely the nature of cognition.</p> <p>4. Way of asserting objects There are two types of objects of knowledge: 1. ultimate truths and 2. conventional truths. The definition of an ultimate truth is: that which is realized by the direct valid cognizer directly realizing it by way of the vanishing of dualistic appearance. Ultimate truth, final reality (<i>Skt. dharmata</i>), sphere of reality (<i>Skt. dharmadhatu</i>), and final mode of abiding are equivalent. There are two divisions of ultimate truths: 1. subtle selflessness of phenomena and 2. subtle selflessness of persons. When the subtle selflessness of phenomena is divided by way of the bases of emptiness, there are twenty emptinesses. When they are condensed, there are eighteen; when they are condensed, there are sixteen; when they are condensed, there are four emptinesses, and so forth. Illustrations of the subtle selflessness of phenomena are, for example, the emptiness that is a form and the valid cognizer apprehending that form being empty of being different substances and the emptiness that is a form being empty of existing by way of its own characteristics as a basis for applying the term ‘form.’ An illustration of the subtle selflessness of persons is, for example, the emptiness that is a person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent.</p>
What is an ultimate truth: Ultimate truth, Thoroughly established nature, emptiness are synonymous.
There are many definitions of ultimate truth from different perspectives, one is: <i>the final object of observation of a pure path</i> .
Here, pure path refers to the wisdom directly realizing emptiness.
Another definition of ultimate truth is: <i>an object when made into the mode of apprehension of a mind, through familiarizing with it, one can eliminate the obscurations</i> .

This is one way to understand ultimate truth: meditation on an object of the mode of apprehension can eliminate obscurations from the mind.
Root text's definition of an ultimate truth is: that (object) which is realized by the (subject) direct valid cognizer directly realizing it by way of the vanishing of dualistic appearance.
' That ' is ultimate truth, emptiness. ' Direct valid cognizer directly realizing ' is the wisdom directly realizing emptiness.
Therefore, this means that: emptiness is realized by the wisdom directly realizing emptiness.
How the wisdom directly realizing emptiness realizes emptiness: The manner/ way/ mode of realizing emptiness is <i>directly, without/ with vanishing of, dualistic appearance</i> .
Therefore, when the wisdom directly realizes emptiness, it does so through the vanishing of dualistic appearance.
What 'vanishing of dualistic appearance' means: This means that, from the perspective of this mind, there are no : 1) conventional appearances, 2) concept/ duality of subject and object, as these two are merged, 3) appearance of external objects.
Showing that emptiness is ultimate truth by way of its etymology: In the Tibetan phrase: ' <i>don dam par</i> ', ' <i>don</i> ' by itself means 'object', ' <i>dam</i> ' here means 'final/ ultimate'.
Therefore, here ' <i>don dam</i> ' means ultimate/ final object. ' <i>Dam par</i> ' here, means the meditative equipoise of a Superior being. Therefore, ' <i>don dam par</i> ' would mean: the object of the meditative equipoise of a Superior.
Ultimate truth in Tibetan is ' <i>don dam bden par</i> ', ' <i>bden par</i> ' means 'Truth'.
Since ' <i>don</i> ' is 'object', here, it refers to emptiness. This is the object of the mind of meditative equipoise of a Superior.
In the perspective of the meditative equipoise of a Superior, [who is observing the object emptiness], there is no discord between reality/ existent and how it appears.
Therefore, [emptiness] is true in the perspective of the meditative equipoise of a Superior.
Since that is the case, therefore, emptiness is an ultimate truth.
Another way to look at the etymology is to take ' <i>don dam</i> ' to mean 'ultimate awareness', which is the meditative equipoise of a Superior being.
Therefore, in the perspective of a meditative equipoise of a Superior being, which is an ultimate awareness, emptiness is true.
This is because, it exists in the way it appears, it is true in the meditative equipoise of a Superior. Since that is the case, it is an ultimate truth.
In summary, there are different ways to define ultimate truth: 1) <i>That which is realized by the direct valid cognizer directly realizing it by way of the vanishing of dualistic appearance.</i> 2) <i>The final object of observation of a pure path [wisdom directly realizing emptiness.]</i> 3) <i>An object, through familiarizing with it when it is made into the mode of apprehension, one can eliminate obscurations.</i>

How the divisions of emptiness are made with respect to their bases of emptiness:

There are twenty divisions of emptinesses, when condensed there are eighteen, sixteen and so on.
However, such divisions of emptinesses are: 1) not made on account of them being different objects of negation, rather 2) they are made on the bases of emptiness.
When the subtle selflessness of phenomena is divided by way of the bases of emptiness, there are twenty. When condensed, there can be four: 1) Emptiness of things 2) Emptiness of non-things 3) Emptiness of nature 4) Emptiness of the ultimate.
1) Emptiness of things – refers to the emptiness which exists on functioning things/ composed phenomena such as form.
2) Emptiness of non-things – refers to the emptiness which exists on uncomposed phenomena such as uncompounded space.
When emptiness is divided into these two, emptiness of things and non-things, then all emptinesses are subsumed into them.
Even though the bases of emptinesses are different, the emptiness is the same.
3) Emptiness of nature – refers to the emptiness [which exists] on emptiness [itself].
4) Emptiness of the ultimate – refers to the emptiness of nirvana. <i>Meditation on emptiness page 204</i>
There are also many other divisions of emptiness, external, internal and so on.
Nevertheless, all of these are merely the divisions of emptinesses according to the base of emptiness, the object that is qualified by emptiness, the object having the nature of emptiness.

There is also the emptiness of the internal, which is the emptinesses of the five sense power, for example, the emptiness of the eye sense power and so on, which are included in the continuum of a person, therefore, it is internal.
Emptiness of the external, which are emptinesses of phenomena not conjoined with the continuum of a person, such as the emptiness of form and so on.

Object of negation of the Mind Only School:

There are two illustrations of the subtle selflessness of phenomena: for example,
1) The emptiness that is a form and the valid cognizer apprehending that form being empty of being different substances. This illustration involves the <i>sense consciousness</i> .
2) The emptiness that is a form being empty of existing by way of its own characteristics as a basis for applying the term 'form.' This illustration involves the <i>conceptual consciousness</i> .

Correctly identifying the object of negation/ object of refutation:

The object of negation is: the object that exists by way of its own character as the referent name of the object.
For example, blue: blue <i>existing by way of its own character as the referent name 'blue'</i> to the conceptual consciousness apprehending blue. Such [a non-existent] is the object of negation.
There is a conceptual thought apprehending blue. Blue [an appearance which exists,] appears to the conceptual consciousness
However, blue appearing <i>naturally/ existing by way of its own character as something to be called 'blue'</i> and <i>without depending on the conceptual consciousness apprehending blue</i> , this is the object of negation/ object of refutation.
According to the Mind Only School, blue does not exist [if it is existing] by way of its own character/ as the uncommon mode of subsistence, to be the basis for applying the term 'blue' in relation to the conceptual consciousness apprehending it.
Therefore, the object of negation is: Blue as the basis for applying the term 'blue' <i>existing by way of its own character</i> .
However, blue in general, is truly established, which is an Other-powered nature, it exists by way of its own character.

How products are the same for both Sutra School and Mind Only School: Both the Sutra School and the Mind Only School assert that [products like] blue exists by way of its own character, is truly established/ truly existent.

Since that is the case, they both assert that there is a blue that *exists as the basis for applying the term 'blue' to the conceptual consciousness apprehending blue*.

How the mental constructs are differentiated: However, the Sutra School asserts that such a blue *being the basis for applying the term 'blue' exists by way of its own character*, whereas the Mind Only School asserts that such a blue *being the basis for applying the term 'blue' does not exist by way of its own character*.

Therefore, to the Mind Only School, such a blue, being the basis for applying the term 'blue', exists as merely imputed by conceptual thought, it does not exist by way of its own character.

Therefore, blue that is the basis for applying the term 'blue', does exist. However, such a blue does not exist from the side of blue but merely as a construct of imputation by conceptual thought.

Reasons to show why the object of negation does not exist: If there is a blue that existed naturally as the basis for applying the term 'blue' from its own side, without depending on conceptual consciousness, then what would be the problem?

There is a blue that exists as the natural base of engagement of blue/ existing as the basis for applying the term 'blue'.
However, blue does not exist as the natural base of engagement of blue/ existing as the basis for applying the term 'blue' [if it is] existing from its own side/ existing by way of its own character.

If there was a blue that existed naturally as the base of engagement of blue/ existed as the basis for applying the term 'blue' by way of its own character, then there would be a problem:

For example, a flat-based bulbous thing: If such a *flat-based bulbous thing* existed as the basis for applying the term 'vase' *by way of its own character*, then by merely seeing the *flat-based bulbous thing*, one would naturally think of 'vase'.

This is because, one would be able to see 'vase' immediately if the vase existed as the basis for applying the term 'vase' *by way of its own character*.

If the [name of the] object existed from the side of the base of engagement, then just by merely perceiving the 'flat-based bulbous thing', one should be able to see 'vase'. However, this is not really so.

If the basis of engagement of the conceptual consciousness, a 'flat-based bulbous thing' existed naturally, from its own side as the basis for applying the term 'vase', then when one sees that 'flat-based bulbous thing', one should apprehend vase immediately. However, this is not the case.

Since that is the case, the basis of engagement is merely imputed by conceptuality.

Illustrations to show the fallacy of the existence of the object of negation:
1) Arya Asanga gave the example a person who was known by three different names: if the person existed naturally as the basis of engagement of three different names, then it would fallaciously mean that there would be three separate individuals.
If a person existed as the base of engagement/ basis for applying the name from its own side, then a person who is known by three different names would absurdly mean that there would be three different persons.
2) If two different persons were to possess the same name, if these two persons existed naturally as the bases of engagement, for example, both existed naturally as the bases of engagement as John, both existed as the bases for applying the name John from their own side, then this would absurdly mean that these two individuals would be one person.
3) If blue existed as the basis for applying the term 'blue' by the conceptual consciousness apprehending it to be by way of its own character, then it would absurdly mean everybody who looked at it would necessarily see blue.
This is because, [the blue existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'blue'] would not be dependent on terms/ imputation/ names/ being called this and that.
In essence, there is a blue which is the basis for applying the term 'blue' to the conceptual consciousness apprehending it.
However, such a blue which is the basis for applying the term 'blue' to the conceptual consciousness apprehending it does not exist by way of its own character. Rather, it is a mere imputation by conceptuality.
Therefore, this is what is meant in the root text (page 15): <i>“a form is empty of existing by way of its own character as a basis for applying the term 'form'.”</i>
Therefore, one needs to understand: 1) This sentence, <i>“form is empty of existing by way of its own character as a basis for applying the term 'form'.”</i> 2) The fallacies incurred if <i>“form existed by way of its own character as a basis for applying the term 'form'.”</i> 3) Due to this, then <i>“form existing as the basis for applying the term 'form', can only exist as merely imputed by conceptual consciousness.”</i>

Lesson 15

23 April 2013

SQ: For the True Aspectarians, how can multiple objects be generated in a single consciousness, which has to apprehend all such multiple objects?

KR: Sutra School asserts that the consciousnesses are aspected. They also assert what the Mind Only School's three types of True Aspectarians assert: equal number of apprehenders and apprehendeds, half-eggists as well as non-pluralist.

The difference for the Sutra School is that, they assert external objects. Therefore, the casting of the aspect comes from the side of the object, which is cast to the consciousness perceiving/ apprehending it.

However, from the perspective of the Mind Only School, the aspect that is [generated in the consciousness] is not cast from the side of the object. Such [generation of the aspects of the object in the consciousness] is due to the ripening of a particular karmic seed/ propensity.

As for the non-pluralists' position, one consciousness is generated into many aspects. For example, eye consciousness apprehending blue is just one consciousness. However, it is not merely blue that appears to this eye consciousness. Everything that is the collection of blue: impermanence of blue, blue being a product, blue being a functioning thing, all such isolates appear to the eye consciousness apprehending blue. Although everything within the collection of blue appears to the eye consciousness apprehending blue, nevertheless, eye consciousness apprehending blue is **only** generated into the aspect of blue. It is not generated into the aspect of blue's impermanence, blue being a product and so on.

SQ: What is the difference between gross object and external object?

KR: **How Sutra School asserts external object:** Firstly, one needs to understand what the Sutra School's assertions of external object is all about. They assert directionally partless particle, which aggregates to form a gross object, which acts as the [observed object condition] for the production of the consciousness apprehending it. As such, there is a cause and effect relationship. In the case of an eye consciousness apprehending vase, vase must exist prior to the eye consciousness apprehending it. Vase acts as the [observed object condition] for the production of an eye consciousness apprehending vase. There is a formal and latter sequence: vase and then eye consciousness apprehending vase. Therefore, [their productions] are not simultaneous.

How Mind Only School refutes external object asserted by the Sutra School: However, this very assertion of external object is refuted by the Mind Only School. Nevertheless, they do assert vase and the eye consciousness apprehending vase exist. Both the subject and object exist. However, both are not produced sequentially but are produced simultaneously from the ripening of one karmic imprint/ predisposition, which produces both the objective aspect and the subjective aspect. They also do not assert directionally partless particle. Therefore, there cannot be coalescing of such particles to form gross form, and as such, there would not be any valid cognizer to apprehend such external objects.

What is gross form: Mind Only True Aspectarians do assert gross objects whereas Mind Only False Aspectarians refutes the five gross objects of form, sound and so on, because for the False Aspectarians, asserting gross object is the same as asserting external object.

To the True Aspectarians, a gross blue means a clear and vivid blue appearing. A gross vase is that which is occupying a space there. To them, such appearances are valid because they exist in the way they appear.

For the False Aspectarians, they refute gross blue, as asserting gross blue is the same as asserting external blue. Therefore, for them, the direct perceiver apprehending form is mistaken with respect to the factors of appearance of: form appearing as form and form appearing as gross form. This is because, [when such appearances occur], there is an appearance of external form.

Therefore, the False Aspectarians assert that, what the True Aspectarians assert as form appearing as form is form appearing as external form.

For the True Aspectarians, the direct perceiver apprehending 1) blue as blue and 2) blue as gross blue, is unmistaken with respect to the factors of appearance of: blue appearing as gross blue or vase appearing as gross vase. To them, this does not mean there is an external blue or external vase.

Therefore, both the True Aspectarians and False Aspectarians assert that the eye consciousness apprehending blue, for example, is a mistaken consciousness. However, they differ as to **how** the consciousness is mistaken and **what** it is mistaken with respect to.

True Aspectarians: eye consciousness apprehending blue is unmistaken with respect to the factor of blue appearing as blue.

False Aspectarians: eye consciousness apprehending blue is mistaken with respect to the factor of blue appearing as blue.

Due to this, therefore, there is a difference in the assertions on whether blue appearing as gross blue is mistaken or not.

Correctly identifying what is the very subtle object of negation and what is not the object of negation:

For an eye consciousness apprehending blue, although there is only one consciousness, nevertheless, there are many ways/ manners/ modes of appearance that appear this consciousness, there are appearances of:
External blue, blue as the natural base of engagement of blue, blue as the referent/ basis for applying the term blue, appearance of blue existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term blue, appearance of blue as blue and so on.
Therefore, there are many appearances that appear to the eye consciousness apprehending blue. However, such appearances are not due to a single karmic predisposition/ karmic latency, but the ripening of different karmic latencies.
What is the object of negation: Of the many appearances to this eye consciousness apprehending blue, the object of negation/ object of refutation is: 1) The appearance of an external blue. 2) The appearance of blue existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term blue/ as the referent name of blue/ as the natural basis of engagement of blue.
How the Sutra School and Mind Only School are the same in asserting the object that exists : Both schools assert that –
1) Blue exists from its own side and by way of its own character
2) Blue also exists as a natural base of engagement of blue/ exists as the basis for applying the term blue.
How the Sutra School is differentiated:
For the Sutra School, blue also exists by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term blue.
The blue that is a natural base of engagement of blue/ blue that is a basis for applying the term blue has to exist as its own uncommon mode of subsistence/ from its own side, it cannot exist as mere imputation by conceptual thought.
If blue does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term blue, then it would render blue as the same category as a rabbit's horns.
This is because, although rabbit's horns do not exist, nevertheless, there is a conception of rabbit's horns. The base of engagement of conception is rabbit's horns.
Therefore, blue exists by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term blue, it cannot exist as merely imputed by conceptual consciousness.
Blue is blue from its own side/ entity/ nature. Blue being established as blue is not merely imputed by conception nor by terms.
Similarly, form being established as form/ form being in the nature of form is from the side of the entity of form itself. Form being form is not merely an imputation by conceptual thought nor by terms.
This is because, if form being established as form is merely imputed by thought or terms, then this would render form to be not different from rabbit's horns.
Since that is the case, a blue that is the basis for applying the term blue also has to exist by way of its own character. It cannot be merely imputed by thoughts or terms. Otherwise, this would render blue that is the basis for applying the term blue to be similar to a rabbit's horns.

How the Mind Only School is differentiated:	
For the Mind Only School, blue <i>does not exist by way of its own character</i> as the basis for applying the term blue.	
The blue that is the basis for applying the term blue exists from its own side merely as an imputation by conceptual consciousness, it does not exist by way of its own character.	
Form exists from its own side and by way of its own character, nevertheless, form as the basis for applying the term form does not exist by way of its own character.	
Although there is a form that is a basis for applying the term form, it does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term form.	
Reasons to refute basis of imputation as naturally bases of engagement to be truly established: If form existed by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term form, then merely having the mind apprehending a flat-based bulbous thing as its basis of engagement would automatically invoke the term 'vase'. This is not necessarily the case.	
The conceptual thought therefore plays a primacy role: a) Firstly, there is the basis, b) Then, a concept imputing a term to that basis arises. For example, a vase: a) Firstly, there is a flat-based bulbous thing b) Then, conceptuality is involved and labels vase.	
Therefore, the basis of engagement of the term 'vase', is the flat-based bulbous thing. However, such a flat-based bulbous thing being the basis of engagement of the term 'vase' is <i>coming from the side of the conceptual thought</i> .	
In relation to this conceptual thought imputing vase, the flat-based bulbous thing then becomes the basis of engagement for the term vase/ becomes the basis for imputing the term vase. Therefore, such a flat-based bulbous thing being the basis for applying the term vase is dependent on the conceptual consciousness apprehending vase.	
The flat-based bulbous thing is indeed the basis of engagement of the conception apprehending vase. It is indeed the basis for applying the term vase. However, it being the basis for applying the term vase does not exist by way of its own character, from its own side.	
If the flat-based bulbous thing existed by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term vase, from its own side, then anyone who sees that flat-based bulbous thing would be able to see vase instantly without the need to <i>think about the idea of vase</i> or to <i>label vase</i> .	
Therefore, the expression 'vase', in relation to this flat-based bulbous thing, has a factor of being imputed by conceptuality.	
Using a specific individual as another example, such an individual can be regarded as wise or knowledgeable. The term 'knowledgeable' or 'wise' is imputed. Such a person is the basis of engagement.	
The term 'wise/ knowledgeable' is engaging in/ referring to that person, which is the <i>basis of imputation</i> for the <i>expression</i> 'wise/ knowledgeable'. It is also the <i>basis of engagement</i> for the <i>conception</i> of a wise/ knowledgeable person.	
However, this same person can also be regarded as a 'fool' by others. For this other group, this person is the basis for the expression 'fool', the basis for the 'conception of this person as a fool'.	
Therefore, this same person is 'wise/ knowledgeable' to some and 'foolish' to others. Both characteristics exist on this person.	
Therefore, there is a factor of being 'wise', there is also a factor of being 'foolish'.	
However, such factors of being 'wise' or 'foolish' does not exist from the side of the person:	
1a) The person does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'foolish'.	2a) The person does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'wise/ knowledgeable'
1b) The person does not exist by way of its own character as the basis of engagement for the conception thinking that 'the person is foolish.'	2b) The person does not exist by way of its own character as the basis of engagement for the 'conception apprehending wise/ knowledgeable person.'
If this person existed by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'foolish', and also existed by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'wise', then it would absurdly mean that this person is both wise and foolish at the same time	
Therefore, from this example, it is clear that this one person does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'wise'. Neither does the person exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'foolish'.	
In essence, one needs to understand that, if things and events existed by way of their own characters as the bases for applying a specific term, then what would be the problem?	
Why does form not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term form? Why does form not exist by way of its own character as the natural basis of engagement for the conception apprehending form?	

<p>Practical applications of abandoning the object of negation: Such an understanding can have practical applications, for example, equalizing the eight worldly dharmas –</p>
<p>One can be praised or criticized. When one is praised, one can think that one is not the basis [of engagement of being] praised that exists by way of its own character.</p>
<p>Similarly with the factor of being criticized. One can think that one is not the basis [of engagement of being] criticized that exists by way of its own character.</p>
<p>When one is able to think like that in relation to how one reacts to being praised or criticized, it is very helpful.</p>
<p>This is because, one understands that as an individual, one does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for being praised. This means that, praise is merely imputed. Therefore, one would not be overly excited and get carried away.</p>
<p>Similarly, when one is criticized, such criticism is merely imputed by conceptual thought. This is because, again, one as an individual, does not exist by way of its own character as the natural basis of engagement of those criticisms/ hurtful words.</p>
<p>[In this example of] a person being praised, according to the Mind Only School, the person is truly established. The person doing the praising is also truly established. However, that [idea of being] praise itself is merely imputed.</p>
<p>How the person as the basis of designation exists, but the term being imputed does not exist from the side of the basis of designation:</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche exists. He is also known as Geshe Chonyi. He is the basis of designation of the term 'Geshe Chonyi'. There is also the person who designates the term 'Geshe Chonyi'.</p>
<p>The person who designates the term is truly established, Geshe Chonyi as the basis of designation is also truly established.</p>
<p>However, the name/ term 'Geshe Chonyi', is merely imputed.</p>
<p>Therefore, the fact of the 'person being Geshe Chonyi' does not exist from its own side.</p>
<p>Therefore, the basis of designation exists, what is imputed is 'Geshe Chonyi'. However, the term/ what is imputed, 'Geshe Chonyi', <i>does not exist from the side of the basis of designation.</i></p>
<p>If the term/ label/ expression 'Geshe Chonyi' existed from the side of the basis of designation, then whoever sees the basis of designation would all be able to label 'Geshe Chonyi' unanimously.</p>
<p>Therefore, the factor of the person being 'Geshe Chonyi' is merely imputed, this means that the factor of the 'person being Geshe Chonyi' does not exist from the side of the basis of designation.</p>
<p>Likewise, 'Geshe Chonyi' is also a monk. However, 'Geshe Chonyi' does not exist by way of its own character as a natural basis for applying the term 'monk'.</p>
<p>Therefore, the 'person Geshe Chonyi', is the basis of designation for: 'Geshe Chonyi', 'monk', 'man' and so on.</p>
<p>However, the factor of the 'person being Geshe Chonyi', the factor of 'Geshe Chonyi', the factor of 'monk' and so on are all merely imputed. [Such terms] do not exist from the side of the basis of designation, which is the 'self / I / person'.</p>
<p>Khenrinpoche's account to show how the term being imputed does not exist from the side of the basis of designation:</p>
<p>One day, I had done my walking in the Botanical Gardens. I was waiting at the gate for someone to pick me up.</p>
<p>There was a couple, probably foreign tourists, who came towards me and asked: “Are you working here?”</p>
<p>Perhaps [the robe looked like uniforms] for someone working at the Botanical Gardens! They did not know it was the [robe] of a monk. I replied that I was not [working there].</p>
<p>They said they were waiting to be picked up by the tourist bus, and asked me if this spot was the pick up point. I said: “I think so, this is the only spot for bus pick up, so the buses would most probably come here.”</p>
<p>Therefore, this shows that, in dependence on the basis of designation, Khenrinpoche being known as 'monk', 'Geshe Chonyi', such a factor of 'Geshe Chonyi, the factor of 'monk', does not exist from the side of the basis of designation.</p>
<p>The factors of 'Geshe Chonyi' and 'monk' are merely imputed by conceptual thought.</p>
<p>The essence to understand is: Why form does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term form.</p>
<p>How terms and imputations by thoughts are responsible for the existence of names: Every phenomenon has a name, everything is known as something. Things are established/ come into being by being labeled as something.</p>
<p>Therefore, the investigation is to determine <i>how</i> the name of any particular object exists: is it established from the side of the object, as something uncommon/ peculiar to the object, or are there some other ways of existing?</p>
<p>The Mind Only School asserts that, the object that is called as whatever name, does not come from the side of the object but from the side of thoughts/ terms.</p>
<p>This school is showing that thoughts and terms are the powerful over-riding factors responsible for the names.</p>

How terms and imputations by thoughts engage their objects:

The names do not come from the side of the object, rather, it is the thoughts and terms imputing that accounts for the [existence] of the names.
Whatever objects there are, say objects one, two, three and four. These objects are respectively the basis of designation for the label: object one, object two, object three and object four.
When one says 'object one', one's [thought] is referring to something, 'object two' is also referring to something as well.
Moreover, the term itself is also referring to something too.
Therefore, what one needs to do is to discover how, such terms engage their objects:
Does the basis of the term 'object one' exist from the side of the basis of designation or not?
The name 'object one' does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'object one'.
'Object one' which is the basis for applying the term 'object one' does not exist by way of its own character from the side of the object, which is the basis of designation.
In essence, the Mind Only School asserts that all phenomena do not exist by way of their own characters as the basis for applying the terms that are given [by conceptual thoughts.]
Although things do not exist in such a way, nevertheless, things appear to exist in such a way.
For example, an eye consciousness apprehending a flat-based bulbous thing. Such a flat-based bulbous thing appears as a 'vase', it also appears as the 'basis of engagement of the term vase'/ 'that which the term <i>vase</i> is getting at'.
Is the flat-based bulbous thing, something which is referred to by, the term 'vase'? Yes
When one thinks of 'vase', 'vase' is referring to something, what one sees as the flat-based bulbous thing appearing to one as the thing that the term 'vase' is getting at.
The flat-based bulbous thing is indeed the basis of engagement of the term 'vase', it is the basis for applying the term 'vase'.
However, what appears is this flat-based bulbous thing <i>appearing from its own side, by way of its own character, as that</i> which the term 'vase' is referring to, as that which is referred to by the term 'vase'.
One has the [mistaken] appearance of a flat-based bulbous thing being naturally/ by way of its own character/ from its own side to which the term 'vase' refers to/ is getting at. Such an appearance is mistaken and is refuted by the Mind Only School.
There is the [mistaken] appearance of a flat-based bulbous thing appearing from its own side without being merely imputed by thoughts or terms as that which is referred to by the term 'vase'. [Such an appearance] does not exist.
The Mind Only School refutes such an appearance, as it does not exist in the way it appears.
However, the Sutra School accepts [this appearance] as valid. This is because, just as the flat-based bulbous thing appears to exist by way of its own character as that which is referred to by the term 'vase', it is also how it exists.
Since they also assert external object, therefore, they refute the non-existence of subject and object as different substances.

SQ: To the sense consciousness apprehending blue, the appearance of blue existing as the referent name of blue, appearance of blue existing as the natural base of applying the name blue, appearance of blue existing as the natural basis of engagement of blue, all exist by way of its own character?

KR: To the eye consciousness apprehending blue, many things appear: appearance of blue as blue, appearance of external blue, appearance of blue as the basis for applying the term blue, appearance of blue existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term blue. Since sense consciousnesses are necessarily mistaken, therefore, it does **not mean** that **whatever appears** to them **necessarily exists**. The appearance of blue existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term blue is a non-existent Imputational nature. Such a non-existent Imputational nature appears also to a sense consciousness, but it does not exist in the way it appears.

SQ: Are the two: the referent name of the object and the natural base of applying the name of the object, the same?

KR: 1) The basis of engagement of the term or the basis for applying the term and

2) The basis of engagement of a conception

are two different phrases, but they mean the same thing.

SQ: That means, referent name, base of applying the name, and base of engagement, all these three phrases refer to the same thing? KR: yes, **can** be the same.

SQ: To the conceptual consciousness apprehending blue, the appearing object is mental image of blue. It is not able to distinguish between the mental image of blue and what it realizes, blue. Therefore, this is the same as Sutra School as being mistaken. However, does the Mind Only School assert a more subtle mode in that the conceptual consciousness does not realize that the [mental image] is merely imputed by thought? Can one say that the blue is the actual object whereas blue as the basis for applying the term blue is the mental image/ meaning generality of the object?

KQ: For a conceptual consciousness apprehending blue, what is it not realizing?
 SR: It does not realize that it is merely imputing the term blue onto the base.
 SQ: The actual object exists, is established by way of its own character, but the mental image of blue is not established by way of its own character. KR: yes.
 SQ: However, the conceptual consciousness does not realize that. KR: yes.
 SQ: So, the thing to refute is to realize that the mental image of blue is [to be] established by way of its own character?
 KR: The explanations about the object being the basis of applying its term is not merely to prove/ establish that the mental image is imputed by thought. What is to be established in the example of blue, is that blue does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term blue, blue does not exist by way of its own character as the basis of engagement of the term blue, that is all.
 SQ: So, it has nothing to do with the mental image being involved?
 KQ: Is the mental image of vase the basis of engagement of the term 'vase'?
 SQ: For a conceptual consciousness?
 KQ: The question is, is the mental image the basis of engagement of the term 'vase'?
 KR: The mental image of the vase cannot be the basis of engagement of the term 'vase', this is because, whatever is the basis of engagement of the term 'vase' is necessarily vase itself.

Lesson 16

25 April 2013

Linking one's own Other-powered nature, one's self and its aggregates, to the Four Seals:

In Lama Tsongkhapa's <i>The Essence of the Good Explanations, Treatise Discriminating What is to be Interpreted and the Definitive</i> , there is a verse that says: “Other-powered natures are empty of Imputational natures.”
This is essentially referring to the Three Natures: Other-powered nature, Imputational nature, Thoroughly established nature.
With respect to Other-powered nature, one way to understand it is this: it refers to phenomena which are under the control/ influence of their causes and conditions. In this sense, they are 'other-powered'.
There are two divisions: pure and impure Other-powered natures.
Impure Other-powered natures refer mainly to the contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates, one's contaminated existence, which are mainly karma and afflictions.
The second of the four seals states that all contaminated phenomena are misery. One's contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates/ contaminated existence, which is an impure Other-powered nature, is miserable, in nature of suffering
This is because, it is other-powered, under the control of its own causes and conditions, karma and afflictions.
Due to one's contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates being under the control of karma and afflictions, therefore it is in the nature of suffering.
How to apply understanding the nature of one's own Other-powered nature to practice:
1) One firstly gains an understanding of Other-powered nature in general.
2) Then one uses one's contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates as an illustration of that to see how these are other-powered, under the control/ influence of one's own karma and afflictions.
2a) When one sees that one's contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates is an Other-powered nature, this means that these has no freedom at all, that these necessarily have to experience [whatever that comes along].
2b) This is because, one's aggregates are under the control of one's own karma and afflictions, being other-powered.
3) One then understands/ sees that it is in the nature of suffering.
When one's contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates become an object to be observed/ focused upon, then it acts as a basis for one to be upset and angry or be attached. Through that, one accumulates karma.
One gets upset, angry, generates hatred, attachment, desire and so on, due to having one's contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates as one's object of focus.
One develops all such afflictions, which causes problems, unhappiness, sufferings and cyclic existence.
When one focuses on this impure Other-powered nature, one's contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates, one should observe how it appears/ present/ projects itself to one's mind.
One should check whether this is an accurate representation of reality, whether this is how one's contaminated body and mind exist.
When one gets upset or attached, one's contaminated body and mind becomes the object of focus and acts as the basis for anger or attachment to arise.

When anger or attachment arise, one should examine one's own experience: how does one's contaminated existence/ body and mind projects/ presents itself to one? It presents itself/ appears to one in a particular way.
What one needs to do is to examine whether such an appearance/ presentation accords with reality or not.
According to the Mind Only School, for example, when one looks at one's own experience, thinking about one's body and mind, there is this appearance of an external body and mind, something that is of a separate/ different nature from the mind.
Therefore, there is [an appearance of] an external contaminated body and mind.
Although there is such an appearance of an external object, they assert that such an appearance is false. This is because, that is not how the body and mind exist in reality, they are not external objects.
This is one of the many examples the Mind Only School uses to show the disparity between how one's contaminated body and mind appear to one and how they actually exist in reality.
They assert that although things appear as existing with a separate/ different entity from the mind, which means these are external objects, however, that is not how things exist. There are no external objects.
If there are external objects, then these objects should exist as the basis for applying the term 'this and that' from the side of the object.
This and that phenomena/ object does not exist as the basis for applying the term 'this and that phenomena' from the side of the object.
If there are external objects, then indeed, phenomena would naturally be the basis for applying the term this and that from the side of the object, [absolutely having] nothing to do with the conceptual consciousness imputing it to be so.
Therefore, for the Mind Only School, the very fact that this and that phenomenon which is the basis for applying the term 'this and that', exists as something that is imputed by conceptuality, and not from the side of the object.
The very fact that this or that phenomenon which is the <i>basis</i> for applying the term 'this or that', is only an appearance to the mind/ a mere imputation/ mere conceptuality.
If one understands that whatever this or that Other-powered nature there is, is the basis for applying the term 'this or that', exists only as an imputation and not from the side of the object, then it will be helpful for dealing with one's afflictions.
This is because, one's basis for the arising of the afflictions suddenly disappears.
How the Three Natures are linked:
One then understands that, those Other-powered natures that are conditions for one to get upset or attached, are only the basis for applying the term this or that which are not coming from the side of the object. Rather, these are mere imputation by mind
If one applies such an understanding to the impure Other-powered nature, particularly one's contaminated appropriated physical and mental aggregates, one can see them to be empty of the Imputational nature, the object of negation.
A form that exists by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'form' is a non-existent Imputational nature, the object of negation.
The emptiness of this, form that exists by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'form'/ the emptiness of this Imputational nature, is the Thoroughly established nature.
Therefore, the entire purpose for the presentation of the Three natures is to arrive at emptiness, Thoroughly established nature
This is necessary, because this is the antidote to the apprehension of self.
Therefore, the Thoroughly established nature is the Other-powered nature's being empty of Imputational nature.
Other-powered nature is just the subject, the basis of inquiry. An illustration of which is one's contaminated body and mind.
This is not an emptiness, but is used as a basis of inquiry, as the basis to which one is establishing emptiness: An Other-powered nature, for example, one's contaminated body and mind, is empty of Imputational nature.
The emptiness which is the Other-powered nature's being empty of Imputational nature is the Thoroughly established nature.
If the Other-powered nature's emptiness of Imputational nature is the Thoroughly established nature, one then has to discover what is this Imputational nature.
If the Other-powered nature's emptiness of Imputational nature is the Thoroughly established nature, to understand Thoroughly established nature, one needs to discover what the Other-powered nature is being empty of: Imputational nature.
What then does Imputational nature mean? If one does not understand this, then one would not understand its emptiness, the Thoroughly established nature, which is <i>empty</i> of the object of negation:
The emptiness of Imputational nature of form existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'form'.

Reasons for presenting the Three natures through understanding its object of negation:

The explanations on the object of negation is to highlight the reasons for the presentation on the Three Characteristics:
For example, the Other-powered nature which is one's contaminated body and mind.
When anger, attachment, desire arise, these frequently have to do with one's body and mind being the object of focus.
By focusing on one's contaminated body and mind, one gets upset, attached and so on, which brings forth whole hosts of problems and sufferings.
The process of evolution for the arising of anger and attachment always start with one's contaminated body and mind appearing to exist in a particular manner.
One completely assents to/ trust in such an appearance, that this is exactly how reality is. One believes in the appearance wholeheartedly.
For example, one's conceptual thought can conceive of one's contaminated body as very beautiful/ pleasant.
How does the body appear in the perspective of this conceptual thought conceiving a beautiful body?
The Mind Only School asserts that this "beautiful body which is the basis for the thought conceiving 'beautiful body'", does not exist from its own side [not findable when sought, therefore, does not exist at all.]
This thought conceiving 'beautiful body' is focusing on the body. However, the body which is the basis for the thought conceiving 'beautiful body', does not exist by way of its own character.
Although this is the reality, in the perspective of this thought conceiving 'beautiful body', the body which is the basis for the thought conceiving 'beautiful body' seems to exist independent of thought.
The body being the basis of the thought conceiving 'beautiful body', seems to appear independently from this thought. Such a particular 'body' does not exist, this is the object of negation.
The body by way of its own character as the basis for the thought conceiving 'beautiful body' does not exist, is the object of negation which is an Imputational nature.
In essence, one's contaminated body and mind do not exist in the way they appear to one. For example, one's contaminated body and mind appear as external objects, although they appear as external objects, this is not how they exist.
One's contaminated body and mind are not external objects. This is because, they are conceived by/ can be the object of thought/ conceptual consciousness apprehending them.
One's conceptual consciousness focuses on one's body and mind. One's body and mind then become the object of this conception, they are the basis for the thought conceiving body and mind.
However, these being the basis for thought conceiving them are something that are posited from the side of thought, not from the side of the body and mind. For this very reason, they are therefore not external objects.
Objects being bases of conception by thought are not established from the side of the object but from the power of conceptuality.
KQ: Does form existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'form' exist?
KR: Form existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'form' does not exist.
It is only by understanding such phrases that one would be able to compare the object of negation of the Mind Only School with the Sutra School:
Sutra School asserts that form <i>does exist</i> by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'form'.
Mind Only School asserts that form <i>does not exist</i> by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'form'.
When one is familiar with the phrases, it is only then that one would be able to understand the reasons for the difference.

How a person does not exist by way of its own character as a basis for applying its term:

<i>General explanation –</i>
Using an example of a young boy called Tashi, both the Mind Only School and the Sutra School assert that:
Tashi the person exists. Tashi exists by way of its own character/ is truly established.
However, the Mind Only School asserts that this is because, Tashi is an Other-powered nature.
Since Tashi exists by way of its own character, right there, therefore, Tashi is <i>not</i> merely imputed.
This is because, the Mind Only School asserts that <i>existence by way of its own character</i> means <i>not merely imputed by thought and existing from its own side</i> .

This is how the Mind Only School asserts Tashi, who does exist like that: not merely imputed by thought, there is something there from the side of the object.
Tashi is a person. Tashi is an Other-powered nature, which in this school, is necessarily established by way of its own character. This therefore makes Tashi necessarily existing by way of its own character and does not exist as merely imputed by thought.
Detailed explanation –
The term 'Tashi' <i>refers</i> to the object, however, in the very expression 'Tashi' itself, there is a factor of imputation: 'Tashi'.
Tashi is established by way of its own character, however, the factor of <i>Tashi being an expression, that which is expressed, that factor of imputation</i> , this is merely an imputation.
<i>That which is expressed</i> by the term 'Tashi', the <i>expression</i> itself, is <i>not</i> [the actual object] Tashi.
It is very clear that Tashi is a self / I / person that exists by way of its own character.
When one says 'Tashi', something is being expressed. That which is being expressed 'Tashi', is <i>not</i> the actual [object] Tashi.
Of course, this term is referring to/ pointing at the person. However, the sound 'Tashi' that expresses something, is <i>not</i> [the actual object] Tashi but a mere imputation.
[The actual] Tashi exists by way of its own character and is not merely imputed by mind. However, that which is expressed by the term 'Tashi' is merely imputed and does not exist by way of its own character.
[Actual] Tashi <i>being</i> the basis for conceiving [the term] 'Tashi' by thought does not exist by way of its own character as well.
Tashi which is the basis for conceiving 'Tashi' by a thought does not exist from the side of [the actual object] Tashi, which does not act as an uncommon mode of subsistence for [the term] 'Tashi'.
If Tashi existed from its own side by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'Tashi', then this would lead to logical fallacies.
One imputes 'Tashi' onto a basis of designation, a set of body and mind. That which is imputed is [the actual object] Tashi.
The very term 'Tashi' is referring to something, engaging in an object.
One needs to understand, when the term 'Tashi' engages its object, what the process of engagement is.
Is the process of engagement coming from the side of the term 'Tashi', or is the process of engagement coming from the side of the basis of designation, the object?
When one says 'Tashi', [this expression] refers to something, an object. Such a process of [the expression] referring to an object is coming from the side of the term 'Tashi' or from the side of the object?
The term 'Tashi' is engaging in the object Tashi. Such an engagement is coming from the side of the term and not from the side of the object.
The very term 'Tashi' is referring to the object Tashi. However, if the term 'Tashi' that refers to the object Tashi is coming from the side of the object, then this would lead to fallacies.
That which is being referred to by the term is the [actual] object, the actual Tashi. The term 'Tashi' refers to none other than [the actual object] Tashi and not something else.
Is such a reference coming from the side of the object or from the side of the word? It cannot be coming from the side of the object.
This is because, if the term 'Tashi', that is referring to [the actual object] Tashi, is coming from the side of the [actual] object Tashi, then whoever sees the [actual] object Tashi should see only Tashi without even mentioning what the label is.
The very fact that the word 'Tashi' is referring to the actual person Tashi, [shows that it] is coming from the side of the word and not from the side of the actual Tashi.
The name 'Tashi' being able to engage in the object Tashi is due to the power of the term or the conception conceiving Tashi, it is not due to the basis of designation, Tashi.
Everything about Tashi itself exists from the own side of Tashi. However, the term 'Tashi' referring to the person Tashi is coming from the side of the term and not from the side of the actual Tashi.

How the term functions to refer to the object:

When one says 'thief', that thief exists from his own side, exists by way of his own character there, is a real thief.
However, the factor of the term 'thief' referring to the object thief is coming from the side of the term and not from the side of the actual thief.

The term 'thief' being able to refer to the actual thief, such a power/ ability/ function is coming from the side of the term 'thief' and not from the side of the actual thief.
This is because, if the power/ ability/ function of the <i>term 'thief' referring to the actual thief</i> is coming from the side of the actual object, then whoever sees the object should be able to see thief.
Therefore, a name does not exist by way of its own character, from its own side, as the basis of engagement of 'name'.
When one says that form does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'form', one has to think how the term 'form' engages its object:
Does the term 'form' engages its object <i>form</i> by the power of the term 'form' or by the power of the actual object?
The very term/ reference 'form's' engaging in the actual object form is coming from the side of the term 'form'.
This is one of the most important assertions of the Mind Only School: 1) Not only do they assert the <i>non-existence of external objects</i> , they also assert that, 2) <i>Things and events do not exist by way of their own character as the basis for conceiving those phenomena by thought.</i>

The most important object of inquiry, the 'findability' or 'unfindability' of an imputed object:

SQ: Is the person who exists from its own side, called Tashi, a gross object or an external object?
KR: We have not even begun to understand [what a person actually is]:
If one says Tashi exists from its own side, by way of its own character, then is Tashi the body or the mind?
This is [the most important of all inquiries in Buddhist philosophy]: Is Tashi the body or the mind?
Every [tenet system] is attempting to find the imputed object: Tashi is that which is imputed, it is an imputed object, it exists as an imputed object. This is therefore a philosophical/ existential question: what or who is Tashi, the imputed object?
With the exception of the Consequent Middle Way School, all schools below it assert that Tashi can and will be found when one searches for it: all these lower schools assert that, <i>an imputed object when sought, is findable.</i>
This means that, at the final analysis, one would definitely be able to find something/ point at something, that is Tashi.
The highest school, the Consequent Middle Way School asserts that, no matter how one looks, one would not be able to find the imputed object: <i>the imputed object, when sought, cannot be found.</i>
For the Consequent Middle Way School, there is nothing that one can point to that is the object.
All lower schools assert that, there is definitely something that one can point to, that is the object when one searches for it.
These lower schools assert that: "if one cannot point to something that is the object, then how can one assert that it exists?"
Therefore, one must initially ascertain who or what Tashi is.
From the perspective of the Mind Only School, those asserting eight consciousnesses, the mind-basis-of-all is the self / I / person; for those asserting six consciousnesses, it is the mental consciousness.
In the final analysis, the self / I / person is the mind/ mental consciousness.
Tashi is not the body but the mind, whether it is the mind-basis-of-all or mental consciousness. It is therefore the mind that is the person. Therefore, it is not possible to refer to Tashi as the gross object.
SQ: What is the difference between 'existing from its own side' and 'existing by way of its own character'?
KR: According to the Mind Only School, if one searches for the imputed object and it is found, then it <i>exists from its own side</i> . For them, all phenomena exist from their own sides, be it Thoroughly established nature, Other-powered nature or Imputational nature, as everything can be found when one looks for it.
If the object cannot exist as being merely posited by thought but from its own side/ established through its own uncommon mode of subsistence without merely imputed by thought, then such an object exists by way of its own character.
For example, an Other-powered nature does not exist merely being imputed by thought, rather, it arises through causes and conditions which are the uncommon modes of subsistence.
Therefore, Other-powered natures are established by their uncommon modes of subsistence/ by their own causes and conditions/ from the side of causes and conditions, it does not come into existence merely by the consciousness labeling it.

The purpose of the presentation of the Three Natures:

Mind Only School asserts that the selflessness of phenomena to be the emptiness of subject and object as different entities, as well the emptiness of object existing by way of its own character as the basis of conception by conceptual thought.
One necessarily needs to initially verbalize these two emptinesses. On the basis of this, would one be able to analyze the meaning of what exactly these two emptinesses are all about.
Of the Three natures: Other-powered nature, Imputational nature and Thoroughly established nature, an example of the Other-powered nature can be the physical and mental aggregates.
The physical and mental aggregates are an example of an Other-powered nature, they are also the bases of designation.
The basis of designation, the aggregate, does not exist by way of its own character, as the basis for applying the term 'aggregate', it does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for conception of a conceptual consciousness.
An aggregate which exists by way of its own character as the basis for conception of a conceptual consciousness is the Imputational nature. The emptiness of this is the Thoroughly established nature.
The entire purpose of analyzing the Three characteristics is this: the Other-powered nature is the basis of emptiness, the object of negation, which is the Imputational nature, exists on this basis of emptiness.
The emptiness/ non-existence of such an Imputational nature, which exists on an Other-powered nature, is the Thoroughly established nature.

Etymology and assertions of the conventional truth: RT page 15

The definition of a conventional truth is: that which is realized by the direct valid cognizer directly realizing it by way of being together with dualistic appearance.
As mentioned [on page 42], there can be alternative definitions of an ultimate truth: <i>the final object of observation of a pure path</i> . Therefore, every other phenomena that are <i>not final objects of observation of a pure path</i> would be <i>conventional truths</i> .
The Three natures can be explained in terms of the two truths: Thoroughly established nature is an ultimate truth, therefore, every other phenomena that are not ultimate truths would be conventional truths.
This means, both Other-powered nature and Imputational nature are conventional truths.
In essence, all existents are either ultimate truths or conventional truths.
The essence of an ultimate truth is, an object, when one focuses and familiarizes on it, all obscurations can be removed from the root.
Therefore, conventional truth is, an object, when one focuses and familiarizes on it, obscurations cannot be removed from the root.
In the root text, an ultimate truth is defined as: <i>that</i> which is realized by the <i>direct valid cognizer</i> directly realizing it by way of the vanishing of dualistic appearance.
Therefore, a conventional truth would be the opposite: that which is realized by the direct valid cognizer directly realizing it by way of being together with dualistic appearance.
In this definition of ultimate truth, <i>'that'</i> refers to emptiness, which is realized by a <i>'direct valid cognizer'</i> , this refers to the wisdom directly realizing emptiness.
What this wisdom realizes is emptiness, how it realizes is through the vanishing of dualistic appearance.
Dualistic appearance refers to: 1) appearance of external object 2) appearance of subject and object 3) appearance of conventional phenomena.
Therefore, when the wisdom directly realizing emptiness realizes emptiness, it does so without these dualistic appearances.
Conversely, a conventional truth is any phenomenon that, when it is realized directly by the direct valid cognizer realizing it, such an object is realized together with any of the above three dualistic appearances.
An illustration of a conventional truth is blue. It is realized by a direct valid cognizer, here, it is an eye consciousness apprehending blue, which apprehends blue <i>by way of/ together with</i> dualistic appearances.
Therefore, to this eye consciousness apprehending blue, there is 1) an appearance of external blue, 2) appearance of subject and object, 3) appearance of conventional blue.

Divisions of conventional truth:

There are two types of conventional truths:

1. other-powered phenomena and 2. conventional truths that are included in imputational constructs.

If it is a conventional truth, it is either an other-powered phenomena or an imputational construct.

However, whatever is an imputational construct is not necessarily a conventional truth, as there can be imputational constructs that are non-existents. Therefore, only imputational constructs that are existents are conventional truths.

This is what is meant by 'conventional truths that are included in imputational constructs'.

Other-powered phenomena and compounded phenomena are equivalent. Conventional truths that are included in imputational constructs and uncompounded phenomena other than ultimate truths are equivalent.

All things are accepted to be the common locus of being truly existent and being a falsity; all final realities are accepted to be the common locus of being truly existent and being true; and all uncompounded phenomena other than final realities are accepted to be the common locus of being falsely existent and being a falsity.

In the Mind Only School, only emptiness is asserted to be a truth [true]. Conventional truths are falsities.

If one understands that Thoroughly established nature and Other-powered nature are truly existent and Imputational nature are not truly existent, then [it will not be difficult to understand these common locus.]

Therefore, falsities are also conventional truths, whereas emptiness/ suchness are ultimate truths and truths [true].

Therefore, ultimate truths and truths [true] are synonymous, whereas conventional truths and falsities are synonymous.

Final realities are necessarily non-affirming negatives. Illustrations of other non-affirming negatives are similar to those of the Proponents of Sutra.

The five sense objects – forms and so forth – are produced on the basis of a substance that is an inner consciousness in dependence upon the latencies of common and uncommon actions deposited upon the mind-basis-of-all. They are not established as external objects.

All types of latencies/ actions are deposited on the mind-basis-of-all. It is through the ripening of these latencies that there are appearances of phenomena.

According to the True Aspectarians, even though the five sense objects – forms and so forth – are not external objects they are accepted to exist as gross objects.

According to the False Aspectarians, the five sense objects – forms and so forth – are not gross objects because if they were gross objects they would necessarily be external objects.

This has been explained earlier [page 36].

Assertions of object-possessors as according to the True Aspectarians and False Aspectarians:**5 Way of asserting object-possessors**

True Aspectarians accept a collection of eight consciousnesses because they assert that in addition to the collection of six consciousnesses accepted by the other proponents of tenets, there are the mind-basis-of-all and the afflicted mentality, making a total of a collection of eight consciousnesses.

Essentially, there are differences in the assertions of the True Aspectarians and False Aspectarians with respect to the number of consciousnesses: True Aspectarians assert a collection of eight consciousnesses, whereas the False Aspectarians assert there are merely the [usual] six consciousnesses.

The six consciousnesses consist of the five primary sense consciousnesses and one mental primary consciousness.

The eight consciousnesses would consist of these six, together with a mind-basis-of-all and an afflicted mentality.

There are illustrations of both a mind-basis-of-all and an afflicted mentality. The consciousness that is an object different from the collection of six consciousnesses and that does not depend upon a sense power which is its own empowering condition is asserted to be the mind-basis-of-all.

To produce any of the [usual] six primary consciousnesses, three conditions must gather. One of these is their respective uncommon empowering condition, which is a sense power.

Therefore, the five sense consciousnesses and the mental consciousness have their respective uncommon empowering conditions, which is a sense power. However, the mind-basis-of-all is not generated/ not dependent upon any sense powers.

Reasons for asserting the mind-basis-of-all:

The True Aspectarians assert a mind-basis-of-all, which is the repository of all latencies of actions.

For any of the usual six consciousnesses to be produced, there must be an uncommon empowering condition which is its respective sense power. It is by depending on this would these six consciousnesses be generated.
Therefore, these six consciousnesses are generated temporally, which means they are not existing continuously.
Due to this, these six consciousnesses cannot be the consciousnesses which receive all the latencies that sentient beings accumulate.
This is because, the basis of infusion/ the repository of all the imprints of sentient being's karma must be something that is stable and enduring at all times. Otherwise, it will be difficult to account for karma.
Therefore, the True Aspectarians assert that there must be a consciousness other than these six that does not depend upon a sense power which is its own uncommon empowering condition. Such a consciousness is called the mind-basis-of-all.
Such a mind-basis-of-all is an awareness to which objects appear but is not ascertained. It does not realize its objects, neither virtuous nor non-virtuous. Therefore, it is specified as <i>being neither virtuous nor non-virtuous as well as being unobscured</i> .
If it is virtuous, then it is very difficult to account for the mind-basis-of-all for being the repository of imprints of non-virtuous actions; similarly, if it is non-virtuous, it is also difficult to account for it being the repository of virtuous imprints.
In essence, the Mind Only School True Aspectarians assert that, on top of the usual six consciousnesses, there is a mind-basis-of-all. This is to account for the need of a stable and enduring repository of all imprints of karma.
They assert that the usual six consciousnesses are not stable/ enduring, thus are not suitable repository of imprints of actions.
Therefore, they assert that there must be another mind that acts as a repository for imprints, called the mind-basis-of-all.
The consciousness that observes the mind-basis-of-all – its observed object – and apprehends it in the aspect of it being a self-sufficient substantially existent I is asserted to be the afflicted mentality.
Such an afflicted mentality is essentially what a view of the transitory collection is. It is the mind which observes the mind-basis-of-all, therefore, the mind-basis-of-all is the observed object of this afflicted mentality.
This afflicted mentality observes the mind-basis-of-all and apprehends it to be the self-sufficient, substantially existent 'I', which is the view of the transitory collection.
The mind-basis-of-all is asserted to be the illustration of the person that is the support of actions (<i>Skt. karma</i>) and their results.
For the True Aspectarians, the <i>mind-basis-of-all</i> is asserted to be an illustration of a person, which is the support of karma and its results. Therefore, this is the findable 'self / I / person' that moves from life to life, which is the mind-basis-of-all.
With the exception of the Consequent Middle Way School, all schools from the Autonomy Middle Way School to the Great Exposition School assert that everything that exists is findable, which means, when one searches for it, one would be able to indicate that object.
Therefore, all these lower schools assert that, if it exists, then it must be findable, something that one can point to. If one cannot point to something that is the object, then such [an object of inquiry] does not exist whatsoever.
Even though all these lower schools assert a findable 'I', nevertheless, each school has its own assertion of what the 'self / I / person' is.
False Aspectarians assert a collection of six consciousnesses and posit the mere mental consciousness to be the illustration of the person that is the support of actions and their results.
The Mind Only School False Aspectarians assert only six consciousnesses and refutes the mind-basis-of-all.
Therefore, for them, the illustration of a person is the mental consciousness.
[The Proponents of Mind Only] assert two types of awarenesses: 1. valid cognizers and 2. non-valid cognizers.
This presentation is the same as the Sutra School, which has been explained.
6. Way of asserting selflessness: The way of positing illustrations of the coarse and subtle selflessness of persons is similar to the Autonomists and below. An illustration of the selflessness of phenomena is, for example, the emptiness that is a form and the valid cognizer apprehending that form being empty of being different substances.
[Both the presentations of selflessness of persons and selflessness of phenomena] have been explained earlier.

Khenrinpoche's reply to his own three questions posed on lesson 12 [page 40]:

<p>Q1) Is it possible to have a mind that can directly perceive another's mind?</p>
<p>According to the Mind Only School, form and the consciousness apprehending form are one substance.</p>
<p>Qualm from the Sutra School: However, according to the Sutra School, form and the valid cognizer apprehending form are different substances as well as being their respective cause and effect.</p>
<p>They refute objects and subjects to be same substances. This is because, for example, there can be a clairvoyant knowing another person's mind. This clairvoyant is a mind (subject), the object that is realized by this mind is another mind (object).</p>
<p>If these [two minds] are one substance, this would mean that the clairvoyant and the other mind that it realizes would become one entity. This would absurdly mean that these two mind-streams are one, which absurdly means these two are one person.</p>
<p>One's mind and another's mind are not one substance. Similarly, oneself as a person and another person are not the same person. This clairvoyant which knows another person's mind is a valid cognizer which is a clairvoyance.</p>
<p>If one posits that this clairvoyant and the mind that it knows are one substance, then it absurdly follows that these two minds would be one entity, which absurdly follows that these two persons are one person.</p>
<p>Mind Only School's reply to the qualm: To the Mind Only School, they assert that there are no fallacies to such qualms. When they assert that phenomena is in the <i>nature of mind</i>, they do not mean that all phenomena are minds.</p>
<p>This is because, for example, when something is pleasant or unpleasant [to a person], it is essentially determined by that object appearing to [that person] as pleasant or unpleasant, and not necessarily appearing to others [exactly in the same way.]</p>
<p>Therefore, in the final analysis, if one wishes to ascertain what exactly is that pleasant or unpleasant object, it is essentially the factor of appearance of pleasant or unpleasant object to an individual's mind.</p>
<p>To have that factor of appearance of pleasant or unpleasant object in the first place, one necessarily needs the cause, an imprint for that appearance of a pleasant or unpleasant object to arise.</p>
<p>Without an imprint, one would not experience a pleasant or unpleasant object, as it is impossible for it to arise.</p>
<p>When an imprint ripens, one experiences the ripening of that imprint in terms of an appearance of an object.</p>
<p>Such an object is nothing other than the factor of appearance of that phenomenon itself.</p>
<p>It is this factor of appearance of that phenomenon which performs the function of the object.</p>
<p>Take for example, time. During the time when one is suffering/ unhappy, it appears and is felt/ experienced to be very long. This is irrespective of the duration of the actual time that has lapsed. It seems that the miserable experience is never-ending.</p>
<p>Therefore, not only was there the appearance of a long duration, one actually experienced the suffering as if it was very long.</p>
<p>Even though the actual duration may be very short, however, during the time when one is experiencing such a miserable appearance, it would <i>seem</i> to be very long. So, both the appearance and the experience seem to be long.</p>
<p>Therefore, what is actually causing the suffering is merely that appearance.</p>
<p>Since that is the case, when one analyzes deeply, whether it is a long or short duration, it does not really have to do with the actual time-moments. Rather, it is how one 'feels'. What is a 'long time' or a 'short time' depends on how one feels.</p>
<p>It is the same with coming to class, some may feel that the two hours are too long, but perhaps, it may be possible that there are some who feel that it is too short.</p>
<p>Therefore, the Mind Only School can assert that the <i>clairvoyant</i> that knows another's mind is a direct valid cognizer which directly apprehends another's mind without any difficulty:</p>
<p>For example, it is able to realize another's mind that is unlike how an eye consciousness apprehends vase.</p>
<p>An eye consciousness apprehends vase nakedly, however, this is not how a clairvoyance knows/ realizes another's mind.</p>
<p>On the basis of developing a very stable concentration, there will come a time that another's mind will appear to this concentration.</p>
<p>Even though the mind of [the apprehended] maybe going through ups and downs, having different aspects [than the clairvoyant mind], however, such similar aspects [of the apprehended] can appear to the clairvoyant.</p>
<p>Due to this, they can assert that a clairvoyant knowing the mind of another person knows exactly the mind of this person and it is a direct valid cognizer.</p>
<p>For example, it is possible to have a prophetic dream, which clearly appears as a definite future occurrence in a dream.</p>
<p>Such a dream can happen due to the power of karma or through the blessings of the deity. In it, one is 'seeing' an occurrence that has yet to occur. Nevertheless, it is an accurate dream that foretells exactly something that will definitely happen.</p>

What one is actually perceiving is [merely] something that is similar in aspect to the actual occurrence that will occur. One is not perceiving the actual occurrence barely/ nakedly.
This is an example given by the Mind Only School to illustrate similarly how a clairvoyant knowing another's mind is a valid cognizer. According to them, even though a clairvoyant knowing the mind of another does not nakedly/ barely realize that mind, nevertheless, an aspect that is similar to that mind does appear exactly as it is to this clairvoyant.
Therefore, such a clairvoyant can be posited to be a direct valid cognizer.
Since that is the case, there is no danger of the position of two individuals becoming one.
<i>Q2) Is there one common vase that is appearing to all who are looking at it?</i>
Another qualm from the Sutra School: Take a common spot of blue that is appearing to two individuals as an illustration.
The Mind Only School asserts that such a blue that is seen and the eye consciousness apprehending this blue is of the same substance, which is due to the ripening of latency of a specific karma in an individual's mind.
The Sutra School asserts that if there is a common blue that is seen by two different individuals, and if the blue and the eye consciousness apprehending it is the same substance due to ripening of a specific latency of karmic action, then it would absurdly follow that the two separate individuals' minds would be one entity.
Due to this, the Sutra School assert that objects are not in the nature of the mind, that there are external objects.
Mind Only School's reply to the qualm: For example, two individuals looking at a common vase. The Mind Only School asserts that the vase that is appearing to the first person is not the vase that is appearing to the second person.
Therefore, what appears to the first person does not appear to the second person and vice versa.
However, there is no contradiction in asserting that both persons apprehend the vase.
When the first person says: "vase is impermanent", the second person is not making this statement. This means that it is not the same as the second person saying the same thing.
It is similar when the second person says "vase is impermanent", the first person is also not making such a statement as well.
However, both are similar in saying that "vase is impermanent".
If one understands this, then it is easy to understand why, what the first person sees is not what the second person sees, as well as what the second person sees is not what the first person sees.
Therefore, this shows that the two individuals are not same individuals.
The vase that appears to the first person is of one substance with the first person's mind; the vase that appears to the second person is one substance with the second person's mind.
This is because, the vase that appears to the first person does not appear to the second person.
Since that is the case, the vase that appeared to the first person is not one entity with the second person's mind.
<i>3) Does Buddha see the specifically characterized 'hell fire'?</i>
According to the Mind Only School, hell-fire appears to Buddha as well as being one entity with his mind. Hell-fire by itself is established from the ripening of a karma to be born in hell.
However, phenomena do not appear to Buddha due to the ripening of karmic imprint, rather, phenomena appear to Buddha due to him having completed the accumulation of the two collections.
Since hell-fire exists, then there must exist in Buddha's mind a direct valid cognizer apprehending that fire.
This is similar to the above explanations that the Mind Only School asserts on how a clairvoyant functions:
There is a fully qualified hell-fire that appears to hell beings. An aspect similar to that, appears to Buddha's direct valid cognizer apprehending that hell-fire.
An aspect similar to the fire that appears to the hell beings can also appear to Buddha's mind, which does not apprehend it nakedly/ barely but through the appearance of an aspect similar to the [actual] object.
The reason that Buddha can see hell-fire is because the hell beings see hell-fire. Therefore, Buddha directly perceives hell-fire in dependence upon the hell beings seeing hell-fire.
These are some examples to aid in understanding the Mind Only School's assertion that: everything is in the nature of mind.
One has to discovery for oneself that, if one adopts a worldview that all phenomena are in the nature of mind, would one's destructive emotions become weaker, would one become less emotionally involved negatively.
To do so, one necessarily needs to understand their assertions. When one sees that if it does, then there must be some truth in those assertions.

Assertions of afflictive and knowledge obscurations:

7. Presentation of the grounds and paths

This is explained in two parts: 1. objects of abandonment and 2. actual presentation of the grounds and paths.

7A. Objects of abandonment

The conception of a self of persons together with its seeds and the three poisons arising due to the force of that [conception] together with their seeds are posited to be afflictive obscurations.

The conception of [things] as being true together with its seeds, the latencies of that [conception], and all mistaken dualistic appearances that arise due to the force of that are posited to be obscurations to knowledge.

The conception of a self of person has been explained in earlier lessons: the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person. This is essentially an afflictive obscuration.

Here, the conception of true existence refers to the conception of subject and object as different substances. For the Mind Only School, this is asserted to be knowledge obscurations/ obstructions to omniscience.

The seeds of the conception of a self-sufficient substantially existent person, the three mental poisons that arise due to the force of the conception of self-sufficient substantially existent person together with their seeds are also afflictive obscurations

The seeds of conception of true existence are also posited to be knowledge obscurations.

In addition, the latencies planted by this conception of true existence together with the mistaken dualistic appearances arise due to the force of such latencies are also posited to be knowledge obscurations.

Afflictive obscuration – 1) conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person 2) seeds of this conception 3) three mental poisons arising due to this conception 4) seeds of the three mental poisons

Knowledge obscuration – 1) conception of subject and object as different substances 2) seeds of such a conception 3) latencies placed by such a conception 4) dualistic appearance arising due to such latencies

Seeds and latencies can refer to the same meaning at times but can refer to different meanings at others.

Latency, proclivity, predisposition, imprint refer to the same meaning at all times.

Taking the conception of true existence, the conception of subject and object as different substances: There is the seed and latency of such a conception. Both are similar in that both are placed on the mental continuum by this same conception.

However, the seed of conception of subject and object as different substances has the power to newly produce such a conception again in the future.

Whereas the latencies of conception of subject and object as different substances do not have such a power to produce such a conception. What these produce are mistaken dualistic appearances.

The main objects of abandonment, meditation and collections of merit of the three vehicles:

7B. Actual presentation of the grounds and paths

Those of the hearer lineage conjoin the view realizing the selflessness of persons with a small accumulation of merit for the sake of their own welfare, while those of the solitary realizer lineage conjoin the view realizing the selflessness of persons with a middling accumulation of merit for the sake of their own welfare, and, in dependence on having cultivated that for at least three lifetimes, one hundred eons, and so on, actualize their respective enlightenments.

The Three vehicles and Five paths have been explained earlier: Hearers', Solitary Realizers' and Bodhisattvas' vehicles.

The Hearers and Solitary Realizers have as their main object of meditation the selflessness of person. Their main object of abandonment is the conception of a self of person, which is the afflictive obscurations.

They meditate on the selflessness of person to abandon the conception of a self of person for their own welfare.

Therefore, they are the same in having the conception of a self of person as their object of abandonment, the selflessness of person as their main object of meditation, as well as to accomplish their personal welfare.

They are thus differentiated by the amount of merit that they collect:

Solitary Realizers are able to conjoin the view realizing the selflessness of person together with the accumulation of merit over a period of one hundred eons, whereas the Hearers are unable to do that.

Since there is a difference in the abilities to accumulate merits, then there must be a difference in the result that they achieve.

Therefore, in terms of the results, they are said to possess a superior and less superior results.

Bodhisattvas conjoin the view realizing apprehenders and apprehendeds being empty of being different substances with a great accumulation of merit for the sake of others' welfare, and, in dependence on having cultivated that for at least three countless great eons and so on, actualize their respective enlightenment.

The main object of meditation of a Bodhisattva is the selflessness of phenomena, the main object of abandonment are knowledge obscurations, the purpose of cultivation is for others' welfare.

They accumulate merit over a period of at least three countless great eons.

The main difference between the Hinayana and Mahayana tenets' assertion of Buddha:

True Aspectarians assert that when hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers pass beyond sorrow without remainder their continuum of awareness is severed. They assert that it is impossible to sever the continuum of awareness of a buddha superior because they assert that for the bodhisattva who attained enlightenment initially as a complete enjoyment body in Akanishta, the continuum of similar type of aspect of that complete enjoyment body is not severed as long as samsara is not empty, but rather it enacts the welfare of others through various emanations in accordance with the fortunes of each individual disciple.

Mind Only School True Aspectarians are similar to the proponents of Great Exposition School and Sutra School with respect to the Hearer and Solitary Realizer arhats passing beyond sorrow without remainder: their mental continua are severed.

The Hinayana tenets also assert that when someone achieves Buddhahood/ enlightenment, when he passes beyond sorrow, even his continuum of awareness is severed.

However, the Mahayana tenets do not assert that the continuum of awareness of a Buddha is severed when he passes beyond sorrow without remainder.

Therefore, there is a big difference between the Hinayana and Mahayana tenets' explanation of Buddha.

The Mahayana tenets assert that a bodhisattva travels through all ten bodhisattva grounds to achieve enlightenment initially in the pure land of Akanishta in the aspect of a Complete Enjoyment Body, *Skt. Sambhogakaya*.

This is the basis of emanation, where myriads emanations are sent to work for sentient being's welfare.

The Mahayana tenets assert that once enlightenment is achieved, the Buddhas work uninterruptedly for the happiness and welfare of sentient beings.

They explain enlightenment/ Buddhahood in terms of the Four Bodies, *Skt. Kayas*. In general, there are the Two Bodies: the Truth Body (Embodiment of Truth) and the Form Body (Embodiment of Form).

When the Truth Body is divided, there are the Wisdom Truth Body, *Skt. Jnanakaya* and the Nature Truth Body, *Skt. Svabhavikakaya*.

When the Form Body is divided, there are the Complete Enjoyment Body, *Skt. Sambhogakaya*, and the Emanation Body, *Skt. Nirmanakaya*.

Such a presentation of the Four *Kayas* is not found in the Hinayana teachings. According to the Mind Only School:

Four Bodies (Kayas) of Buddha	Truth Body (Dharmakaya)	Wisdom Truth Body (<i>Jnanakaya</i>) – the mind of Buddha directly perceiving all phenomena
		Nature Truth Body (<i>Svabhavikakaya</i>) – the emptiness of the mind of Buddha Superior existing by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'mind of Buddha Superior'
	Form Body (Rupakaya)	Complete Enjoyment Body (<i>Sambhogakaya</i>)
		Emanation Body (<i>Nirmanakaya</i>)

In explaining the Nature Truth Body, the attribute is the same, however, here the object is [different,] using the mind of a Buddha Superior. The attribute is that the mind of a Buddha Superior does not exist by way of its own character as the basis for applying the term 'mind of a Buddha Superior'.

What one needs to understand is the attribute: if the referent name exists by way of its own character on the basis, what would be the problem?

Once one understands the attribute, that something cannot exist by way of its own character as the referent of the term, that this cannot withstand logic, then the non-existence of such an object would be its emptiness.

In essence, the mind of a Buddha Superior's emptiness of a self of phenomena is the Nature Truth Body.

In even simpler terms: the suchness/ final reality of Buddha's mind is the Nature Truth Body.

Complete Enjoyment Body: one initially achieves enlightenment in Akanishta pure land in the aspect of a Complete Enjoyment Body, which is the basis of emanation, from which, myriad emanations are sent to help sentient beings.

Such a Complete Enjoyment Body would last until samsara is emptied, and is said to possess five certainties:

- 1) Certainty of place – it abides only in Akanishta
- 2) Certainty of retinue – the retinues/ disciples are only bodhisattva Superiors
- 3) Certainty of Dharma – only Mahayana Dharma is taught
- 4) Certainty of time – it lasts until cyclic existence is emptied
- 5) Certainty of body – it is beautified by the thirty-two signs and eighty exemplifications

The Complete Enjoyment Body is the basis of emanation of the Emanation Body. This has many examples, one of which is called the Supreme Emanation Body, an illustration is our kind founder, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.
Such a Supreme Emanation Body: 1) teaches all types of Dharma and not necessarily Mahayana Dharma 2) has all types of disciples who have pure karma to meet with a Supreme Emanation Body 3) has no certainty that it will abide until the end of cyclic existence unlike the Complete Enjoyment Body 4) is not necessarily adorned with the signs and exemplifications 5) [abides wherever disciples' continua are ripened for teachings].
Therefore, the Complete Enjoyment Body possesses the five certainties whereas it is not so for the Emanation Body.
The entire basis of such a presentation of the Four Bodies is made on the premise that the continuum of awareness of a Buddha is not severed after passing beyond sorrow without remainder.
Perhaps this is one of the key difference that sets the Hinayana tenets and Mahayana tenets apart: the Mahayana tenets have a detailed presentation of the Four <i>Kayas</i> / Four Embodiments, whereas the Hinayana tenets do not.

True Aspectarians' assertions of Three Final Vehicles:

The individual lineages of the three vehicles are definite because they assert that sentient beings, since beginningless time, are of three different lineages or dispositions and thus have three different aspirations, and thus have three different ways of practicing, and thus will attain three different results.

Definite Hearers' and Solitary Realizers' lineages: Mind Only School's True Aspectarians assert that there are three final vehicles. This is because, they assert that when a Hearer arhat passes beyond sorrow without remainder, his continuum is severed, there is nothing beyond that, one dies as a Hearers' arhat.

The True Aspectarians assert that when a Solitary Realizer arhat passes beyond sorrow without remainder, their continuum is also severed. They die as a Solitary Realizer arhat, which is a different result from the Hearers' arhat. Similarly, they are not going to achieve anything more than that. In this sense, this is definite.

Since that is the case, when the [Bodhisattvas' lineage is included], they assert that there are three final vehicles.

Another reason the True Aspectarians assert three final vehicles has to do with sentient beings possessing different dispositions: sentient beings' predispositions are deposited on the mind-basis-of-all, which is the repository of imprints.

Since they assert the mind-basis-of-all to be truly existent, therefore, there are [truly existent] predisposition/ imprint of being a Hearer, stored in the truly existent mind-basis-of-all.

There is an imprint that is stored in the mind-basis-of-all, such an imprint predisposes that person definitely to be a Hearer.

When such a person enters a path, he will enter the Hearers' path, then travels on to achieve the Hearer's enlightenment and become a Hearer foe destroyer. In this sense, the lineage is definite for such a person.

Likewise, it is the same with the imprint that predisposes someone to be a Solitary Realizer and a bodhisattva wishing to be a Buddha. These imprints are stored in the mind-basis-of-all, which predisposes that person to be of a certain lineage.

Therefore, it is certain that sentient beings are categorized into these three different lineages. Some would only become Hearers; some would become Solitary Realizers and some would only become Buddhas.

Even though this is the assertions of the Mind Only School True Aspectarians, it is not necessarily the reality.

Indefinite Hearers and Solitary Realizers' lineages: There also some Hearers who have the predispositions that enable them to achieve [a fully qualified] enlightenment. Therefore, these Hearers have an indefinite Hearers' lineage.

The *Hearers' lineage* refers to the potential that enables the person to achieve a Hearers' enlightenment.

Therefore, those who are of the *definite Hearers' lineage* refer to those who will definitely enter the Hearers' path, travel that to the end and achieve the Hearers' enlightenment and become Hearers' foe destroyers.

Those who are of the *indefinite Hearers' lineage* refer to those who had initially aspired to a Hearers' enlightenment. Such a person subsequently enters a Hearers' path of accumulation and so on.

However, along the way, this person may meet a virtuous friend, a guru of the Solitary Realizers' path or a Mahayana guru.

Such a person, who initially aspired to a Hearers' enlightenment, may then switch to a Solitary Realizers' path, travels that to the end and then becomes a Solitary Realizer foe destroyer. Such persons are of the indefinite Hearers' lineage.

Similarly apply the same understanding to those of the *definite and indefinite Solitary Realizers' lineage*, as well as those of the *definite and indefinite Mahayana lineage*.

Two types of arhats: According to the True Aspectarians, the Hearers' and Solitary Realizers' arhats are of two types: those *definitely going to pass beyond sorrow without remainder*, and in so doing, their continua of awarenesses are severed.

Not definite to achieve nirvana without remainder: There are also arhats that achieve a nirvana with remainder, but before passing beyond sorrow without remainder, they enter the Mahayana path, and in so doing, will become Buddhas in the future.

In essence, the reasons Mind Only True Aspectarians assert three final vehicles: sentient beings have different dispositions, therefore, they are divided into three lineages, due to that, therefore, there are these three different results.

False Aspectarians' reasons for asserting one final vehicle:

False Aspectarians do not assert that when hearer and solitary realizer foe destroyers pass beyond sorrow without remainder their continuum of awareness is severed because, although they assert that, at that time, the continuum of mere awareness that is included in true sufferings and true origins is severed, they assert that mere awareness goes on to the buddha ground. Therefore, they assert one final vehicle.

The Mind Only School False Aspectarians do not assert the entire continuum of awareness is severed at the time of passing beyond sorrow without remainder. They assert that only the continuum of awareness that is included in true origin and true suffering is severed. The mere awareness, which is not severed, then goes on to the Buddha ground.

Due to this, the False Aspectarians assert one final vehicle.

Reasons for Buddha's teachings being categorized into definitive and interpretive scriptures:

According to the proponents of Great Exposition School and Sutra School, essentially the proponents of Hinayana tenets, a vast majority, if not all of them, assert that the Buddha's teachings are to be taken literally. Therefore, everything that the Buddha said is taken to be true.

However, the Mahayana tenets such as the Mind Only School asserts that the Buddha's teachings must be classified into those teachings that requires interpretation and those teachings that are of definitive meaning.

Many followers of the Hinayana of the past, even till today, do not accept that the Mahayana teachings are teachings of the Buddha. This is due to their worldview.

According to most of these followers, they assert that Buddha only speaks the truth, therefore, whatever He says can be taken literally. So, all [of Buddha's words] must be taken literally.

Since they approach the Mahayana sutras with such a worldview, when they read these teachings literally, such teachings cannot fit their minds as these teachings do not make any sense to them.

On one hand, they assert whatever Buddha has said must be true, and on the other, such Mahayana teachings cannot fit their minds to be true, therefore, they assert that such Mahayana teachings cannot be taught by Buddha, these are not His words.

According to Mind Only School, they divide the scriptures into two categories: those scriptures that are suitable to be read or taken literally, and those scriptures that are not suitable to be taken or read literally.

They assert that *not all* of the Buddha's teachings are suitable to be taken literally.

The Buddha made three turnings of the Wheel of Dharma. The Mind Only School accepts that the scriptures from the first and second turnings of the Wheel of Dharma were taught by Buddha.

However, they do not accept that the teachings from these two turnings are suitable to be taken/ read literally.

They assert that only the teachings/ sutras/ scriptures from the third turning of the Wheel of Dharma are literal teachings.

For example, the Perfection of Wisdom sutras, this belong to the second turning of the Wheel of Dharma.

In it, one finds statements like: "Forms do not exist inherently; forms do not exist by way of their own character."

The Mind Only School accepts that these teachings were spoken by Buddha. However, they do not accept that such statements are to be taken literally, as they do not assert this is how forms exist.

Therefore, such statements require an explanation of the Buddha's intent behind them.

Statements from the second turning such as: "Forms do not exist inherently, forms are not produced inherently" has to be understood as [having an underlying] intent/ meaning.

When Buddha said "forms are not produce inherently," to the Mind Only School, this cannot be taken literally, so it requires interpretation to mean that: "form is not produced from a cause that is of the same nature/ entity as that form."

This is because, to them, form and the cause of form are separate entities/ natures.

Therefore, in the Mahayana tenets' view, all the Buddha's scriptures/ teachings cannot be taken literally.

Hence, there is the division of scriptures into those sutras of interpretive meaning and scriptures of definitive meaning.

Since that is the case, there are a lot of discussions/ debates, through logic and reasoning, [to determine which scripture is of definitive meaning and which is of interpretive meaning].

One needs to understand that the Buddha has to give teachings to fulfill the needs, interests and dispositions of the listeners.

Due to that, it is therefore not necessarily the case that whatever Buddha had said is the final truth/ his final intent.

Nevertheless, followers of Hinayana tenets consider Buddha to be omniscient and is incapable of lying, hence, they consider whatever words uttered by Him to be the truth which does not need any interpretations.
However, the Mahayana tenets' view is that, Buddha teaches for the benefit of sentient beings according to their various dispositions. Hence, there is always the possibility that whatever He has said does not necessarily represent what He thinks.
Therefore, one needs to choose whatever is the better position, whether to take every [scriptures] literally or whether it is better to know that some scriptures need interpretation.
Since it is a competition between these two positions, then whatever makes better sense should be adopted.

SQ: If the Mind Only School asserts that the substantial cause of both the consciousness apprehending its object is that one single imprint. How would this reconcile with the assertion that a substantial cause of form is form and the substantial cause of consciousness is that of clear and knowing?

KR: the Mind Only School refutes external objects. This is because, it is the one karmic latency among the many other karmic latencies that are stored in the mind-basis-of-all which ripens to act as the *substantial cause* that produces both the form and the consciousness apprehending it. If the substantial cause of form is form, would this not mean that one has to accept external objects?

SR: My understanding of the substantial cause of a form is its previous moment. For example, the observed object condition of the consciousness apprehending form is its previous moment of form that has ripened due to the imprint. The first imprint ripens into the subject apprehending object. These subject and object then become the substantial cause for the subject and object for the second ripening of imprint.

K: The main point to understand is: what exactly is the substantial cause of consciousness. It is very clear in all the Mind Only School literature that it is the karmic latency that is deposited in the mind-basis-of-all that acts as a substantial cause that produces both form and the consciousness apprehending form. However, can one posit that the substantial cause of consciousness to be an imprint?

Therefore, if one were to assert that the substantial cause of consciousness is imprint, there would be implications. This is because, the only reason to prove the existence of rebirth has to do with the substantial cause of consciousness being that which is clear and knowing, which is consciousness itself.

Therefore, what the Mind Only School asserts seems to contradict with such a commonly accepted position, against what Dharmakirti has asserted in his own commentaries.

Therefore, this is something that requires much analysis to be able to arrive at a coherent/ reasonable answer.

SQ: What is it that passes beyond sorrow when the Mind Only School True Aspectarians assert that a Hearer and Solitary Realizer foe destroyer passes beyond sorrow?

KR: When a Hearer and Solitary Realizer become a foe destroyer, they achieve a nirvana with remainder. It is this person who will pass beyond sorrow without remainder. The continuum of awareness is then severed. This is not saying that nothing is left over as there is still a [findable] basis. This is because, they assert a nirvana without remainder, which is an emptiness. Since there is an emptiness, then there is a basis of emptiness [which is impermanent]. There is a nirvana with remainder, a nirvana without remainder and a non-abiding nirvana.

Perhaps there is some similarity with the assertions of the Consequent Middle Way School's assertion of the state/ factor of disintegratedness. This school is alone in asserting that this is a functioning thing/ composed/ impermanent phenomena.

In reality, this is not the case, however, from the perspective of the tenets who assert that the continuum of awareness is severed, one has to analyze what these tenets would assert.

Mind Only School's assertions of common and uncommon latencies:

SQ: Root text page 16 - <i>The five sense objects, forms and so forth, are produced on the basis of a substance that is an inner consciousness in dependence upon the latencies of common and uncommon actions.</i> What are the minds that deposit common and uncommon actions, and what would these latencies produce?
KR: The mind-basis-of-all is the basis of infusion of the latencies of all actions, which is neutral, [does not deposit latencies.]
That which deposits these latencies onto the mind-basis-of-all can be any consciousness. If one asserts a collection of six consciousnesses, then any of these six can be the depositor of the latencies of action.
If one asserts a collection of eight consciousnesses, then in addition to these six, the afflicted mentality can also deposit the latencies. All of these latencies are deposited on the mind-basis-of-all, which is the basis of infusion of all latencies.
The latencies of common actions: humans are able to see water in a cup. This common/ shared appearance of water to humans are due to the ripening of latency of a common action.
While humans are able to see water, however, it is possible for an individual to see particular aspects of water that others do not see.
Since everyone is able to see the water, there is the common appearance of water, however, the appearance of water that one person sees may not be shared/ common with others. Therefore, one could assert this to be the ripening of an uncommon latency.
One could also say that the liquid that appears to humans as water is due to the uncommon latencies of humans that enable humans to see the liquid as water. This is because, the appearance of liquid as water is not seen as water by the hell beings.
Therefore, the latency that causes humans to see the liquid in a cup as water can, in this sense, be an uncommon latency that is unshared with [beings of other realms] and is peculiar only to humans.

Introduction to the presentation of the Middle Way School:

Hinayana tenets' view of reality: According to the Hinayana tenets of the Great Exposition School and Sutra School, they assert only a selflessness of persons and do not assert a selflessness of phenomena.
They assert that merely by realizing the selflessness of persons, one would be able to eradicate all destructive emotions/ afflictions. This is because, all the destructive afflictive emotions arise within having a sense of 'I'.
The stronger this sense of 'self / I / person', the stronger would be the anger or attachment that is induced by this sense of 'I'.
Therefore, the Hinayana tenets assert that if one eradicates such a false sense of 'I' and realize the selflessness of persons, one will be able to eradicate all afflictions.
The Hinayana tenets present the selflessness of persons as the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.
They assert that such a self-sufficient, substantially existent person does not exist whatsoever.
Through realizing that such a self-sufficient, substantially existent person does not exist, one's three mental poisons will decrease. Therefore, realizing the selflessness of persons is the method to pacify the destructive emotions.
Once these destructive emotions are pacified, correspondingly, one's sufferings will also decrease.
Therefore, it is very important to gain a good understanding of such an explanation.
Although there are many very extensive presentations of various conventionalities among the four Buddhist tenets, nevertheless, what one should be focused on is their presentation of the <i>view of reality</i> .
Mahayana tenets' view of reality: The presentations of the Mahayana tenets start with the views of the Mind Only School. One would discover that its presentation is more profound than the presentations of the Hinayana tenets.
For example, the Mind Only School asserts that objects of the senses like forms, sounds, smells, taste and touch do not exist in the way they appear, they exist very differently from the way they appear.
They assert that, although forms and so on appear to exist as external objects, however, in reality, such appearances are false.
This is because, these objects are only established through the ripening of latencies, which produce the appearances of phenomena such as form and the mind perceiving it.
Although forms appear to have an external objective existence, in reality, they do not exist that way. Rather, forms merely exist/ come into being through the ripening of latencies/ imprints that are stored in the mind-basis-of-all.

Such a worldview is founded on the fundamental premise that the mind is truly established.
Therefore, mind is given foremost importance in the Mind Only School.
Such a truly established mind holds the imprint/ latencies of action. When these ripen, they would produce the appearances of forms and so forth and the consciousnesses that perceive these forms and so forth.
Due to the ripening of the latencies of ignorance, the appearances of external objects such as external forms are produced.
Such appearances are therefore false appearances. However, [ordinary beings can] mistakenly believe that there are external beautiful forms. Based on such belief, one gets emotionally involved/ attached and so forth.
Therefore, if a person were to realize that these appearances are false, that even though there is an appearance of an external object, but it does not exist in reality, that it exists merely through the ripening of an imprint deposited on the mind, then this would definitely help [to deal with the afflictions].
One realizes that [such an appearance] is merely coming from one's own mind and not from outside of one's mind.
This helps greatly to work against one's attachment, anger and the other afflictions.
Nevertheless, such a worldview of the Mind Only School is based on the fundamental premise that the mind is truly established and is given utmost importance.
Shortcomings of the Mind Only School: Other than focusing on external objects, it is possible to focus on one's own mental states and thereby experience pleasure or pain due to that.
Based on such feelings of pleasure or pain that is derived from focusing on the mind itself, afflictions like anger or attachment can arise due to such feelings.
Therefore, one also needs methods to deal with such afflictions of attachment and anger that are induced by the feelings of pleasure and pain when the mind is the object of focus/ object of observation.
Everything other than the mind, forms and so forth, are mere appearances of the mind due to the ripening of latencies which cause the appearances to arise.
[When ordinary beings are ignorant of this, the Mind Only School has methods to deal with the appearances of external objects that seem not to exist as mere appearances of the mind.]
However, since they assert that the mind is truly established, one can also end up grasping at the mind, grasping at the happy feelings of the mind, grasping at painful feelings of the mind. These would give rise to attachment, anger and so forth.
Therefore, the view of non-external objects does not help to deal with the afflictions that are derived from observing the mind
This is one of the reason that the teachings of the Middle Way School are required: methods to deal with such afflictions.
Assertions of the Middle Way School: The Mind Only School asserts the consciousness/ mind itself is truly established, however, according to the Middle Way School, all phenomena, whether outer or inner, are not truly established at all.
While phenomena are not truly existent/ not truly established, they appear as if they are truly existent/ truly established.
Due to this, the mind assent to an such appearance, which is called an apprehension/ grasping of true existence, a perverse/ wrong consciousness.
This is because, although things and events appear as truly existent, in reality, they do not exist truly. Therefore, the mind which grasps/ apprehends at true existence is a wrong consciousness.
Therefore, it is insufficient to merely possess the Mind Only School's worldview that external objects do not exist. One needs a method to deal with an apprehension of true existence as well.
Therefore, there is a need to understand the presentation of the final tenet, the Middle Way School.
The Middle Way School's explanation of how phenomena do not exist truly is a method to eradicate the destructive emotions and destroy them.
Buddha gave many teachings and uttered many things over a long period of time. However, whatever teachings He gave, in the final analysis, the entire purpose of all that is to lead sentient beings to establish for themselves what reality really is, especially what constitutes the ultimate nature of the person and phenomena.
This is the final goal/ ultimate purpose behind all the teachings that Buddha gave.
Since that is the case, then the very heart essence of studying, learning, reflecting and so forth of the entire Buddhadharma, is this presentation of what constitutes reality, the ultimate nature of the person and phenomena.
Therefore, it is extremely important to settle/ delineate for oneself clearly, what exactly is the ultimate nature of the self and phenomena. With respect to this, the Buddha also gave many teachings on this. The most profound and ultimate of all of His teachings on selflessness are the teachings/ views that are propounded by the Middle Way School.

Definition, division and meaning of the Middle Way School: Root text page 19

Middle Way School

The explanation of the system of the Proponents of Non-Nature (*Skt. Nihsvabhavavadin*) has three outlines:

1. definition, 2. divisions, and 3. meaning of each division.

1. Definition

The definition of a Proponent of Non-Nature (*Skt. Nihsvabhavavadin*) is: a person propounding Great Vehicle tenets who does not assert true existence, even conventionally.

2. Divisions

There are two divisions:

1. Autonomists (*Skt. Svatantrika Madhyamika*) and 2. Consequentialists (*Skt. Prasangika Madhyamika*).

What is a proponent of the Middle Way School: A proponent of Buddhist tenets who assert that phenomena do not exist truly, not even conventionally.

Divisions: Proponents of the Middle Way School are divided into two. Both are similar in asserting that phenomena do not truly exist.

However, 1) the Middle Way Autonomists assert that, while phenomena are not truly existent, phenomena do exist by way of their own characters.

2) The Middle Way Consequentialists assert that just as phenomena do not exist truly, phenomena also do not exist by way of their own characters.

Similarity and difference between the Autonomists and the Consequentialists:

1) Middle Way Autonomists	2) Middle Way Consequentialists
Phenomena do not truly exist, not even conventionally	
Phenomena <i>exist</i> by way of their own characters	Phenomena <i>do not exist</i> by way of their own characters

Brief historical account on the origins of the Middle Way School:

The teachings on how *phenomena lack true existence* comes from the middling [second] turning of the Wheel of Dharma, where Buddha said this many times in the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras.

It was Nagajuna and spiritual sons Aryadeva and so forth who clearly elucidated the meaning of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras. Nagajuna was the trailblazer of the Middle Way School.

Even though Nagajuna Father and Son (Nagajuna and Aryadeva) were the main masters who clearly elucidated the meaning of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras, however, their explanations were done according to the general procedure of the Middle Way School.

They did not divide the structure of the Middle Way into the Autonomy Middle Way School or the Consequent Middle Way School.

While in reality Nagajuna and Aryadeva were Middle Way Consequentialists/ *Prasangika* themselves, however, they did not explicitly identified themselves as such but merely presented the general system of the Middle Way as it is.

Subsequently, there came to be different interpretations of what Nagajuna and Aryadeva taught.

Later, it was Buddhapalita and Chandrakirti who clearly showed and explained that what Nagajuna and Aryadeva had taught were indeed the tenets of the Consequent Middle Way School/ *Prasangika Madhyamika*.

They assert that Nagajuna and Aryadeva's views were essentially the views that formed the *Prasangika Madhyamika* views.

They assert that the *Svatantrika Madhyamika*/ Autonomy Middle Way School's presentation is incorrect.

Later on, the Indian master Bhavaviveka rejected the presentation of Buddhapalita and Chandrakirti and formulated his own explanations of the thoughts of Nagajuna.

Thus, he became the trailblazer [founder] of the Autonomy Middle Way School / *Svatantrika Madhyamika*.

There are controversies over who the founder of the Consequent Middle Way School is, some scholars assert that it was Chandrakirti, while others assert that it was Buddhapalita.

Thus, these are the two schools of the Middle Way: Autonomy Middle Way School and Consequent Middle Way School.

Both are similar in asserting that phenomena do not exist truly, however, the Autonomy Middle Way School asserts that phenomena exist by way of their own character [while the Consequent Middle Way School does not.]

How the Autonomy Middle Way School asserts existence of phenomena:

The Autonomy Middle Way School asserts that, if a phenomenon exists, it necessarily exists by way of its own character, exists inherently, exists from its own side.
They assert that if a phenomenon does not exist by way of its own character, does not exist from its own side, does not exist inherently, then such a phenomenon does not exist at all.
This is because, they assert that if phenomena do not exist from their own sides, then they cannot claim that phenomena exist.
They cannot accept that phenomena exist merely by being imputed by mind, as there must be something that exists from the side of the object.
For them, if a phenomenon exists as merely imputed by mind, then it absurdly follows that anything that the mind labels could exist. Also, if a phenomenon exists as merely imputed by mind, then it is the same as not existing.
This is because, they do not know how to assert existence and non-existence if phenomena are merely imputed by mind.
Therefore, for them, there must be something that exists that comes from the side of the object.
With the exception of the Consequent Middle Way School, all other Buddhist tenets are the same in asserting that phenomena must exist from their own side, exist inherently, by way of their own character.
This is because, they assert that when the [imputed] object is sought, it is findable, one can indicate something that <i>is</i> the object. For example, when searching for the 'I', they can indicate what that is.
It is only the Consequent Middle Way School that asserts that the imputed object, when sought, is not findable, one cannot indicate that which is the object when one searches for it.
Nevertheless, both are similar in asserting that things and events do not exist truly, are not truly established.
Autonomy Middle Way School's assertion of non-existence of true existence of conventional phenomena:
Taking the example: conventional phenomena are not truly existent. If conventional phenomena are truly existent, then they have to exist in the perspective of a valid cognizer/ ultimate awareness.
Here, ultimate awareness refers to the meditative equipoise of a Superior, which is a wisdom directly perceiving emptiness.
If conventional phenomena are indeed truly existent, then this would mean that: 1) They would appear as truly existent, 2) They would have to exist in the perspective of the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness.
However, conventional phenomena do not exist in the perspective of the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness.
Since that is the case, then this would mean that there is no truly existent conventional phenomena.
This is one of the explanation of how conventional phenomena do not exist truly: Conventional phenomena do not exist in the perspective of the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness.
Autonomist's assertion of true existence/ true establishment/ ultimate existence/ ultimate establishment: <i>Established by way of its own uncommon mode of existence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.</i> This is the meaning of the self of phenomena which is the object of negation.
Non-existence of true existence/ true establishment/ ultimate existence/ ultimate establishment means: <i>Not established by way of its own uncommon mode of existence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.</i>

Other differentiating features between Mahayana and Hinayana tenets:

SQ: What are the main differences between Hinayana and Mahayana tenets?
KR: One of the main point differentiating the Mahayana tenets from the Hinayana tenets is the Mahayana tenets' presentation of what Buddha is. This is one of the key distinguishing features of the Mahayana tenets not asserted by the Hinayana tenets.
1) They assert the Four Bodies of Buddha whereas the Hinayana tenets are unable to present this.
2) Perhaps the mind of enlightenment, bodhicitta can be one of the main points differentiating the Mahayana tenets from the Hinayana tenets. It is unsure whether the Hinayana tenets accept bodhicitta or not, that there is such a mind.
With respect to the assertion of external objects, it is not feasible that this can differentiate between the two. This is because, the Sutra Autonomy Middle Way School and the Consequent Middle Way School assert external objects.
3) In the Hinayana tenets, there is no presentation of the progress towards enlightenment through traversing the ten Bodhisattva grounds.

Increasing profundity and pervasiveness of the view of selflessness in the presentation of tenets:

With respect to the presentations of the view of selflessness, one can discern a progression of subtlety of the explanations as one examines from one tenet to the next.
When one compares the presentation of the view of selflessness between the Hinayana and Mahayana tenets, one finds the presentations of the view selflessness in the Mahayana tenets to be more profound.
Even within the divisions of the Mahayana tenets, one can also discern the difference in subtlety among the Mahayana tenets' respective presentations of selflessness as well.
All the four Buddhist tenets present a view of selflessness. They are all the same in asserting that the root of cyclic existence/ suffering is the conception of/ apprehension of/ grasping at a 'self'.
They are also the same in asserting that the only antidote to eradicate the apprehension of a 'self' is to realize selflessness.
However, each tenet has its own assertions as to what the apprehension of a self and its antidote, the view of selflessness, are.
Therefore, as one progresses along with their presentations, one discovers that these assertions become increasingly more profound and extensive.

How the view of selflessness fits into the Noble Eightfold Path:

The most important understanding that a Buddhist can discern/ the most important concept that a Buddhist must settle/ delineate clearly, is this <i>view of selflessness</i> .
The first path of the Noble Eightfold Path is Correct view: when one gains a correct understanding of selflessness, one can consider such an understanding to be a Correct view, which is seeing things/ reality to exist as they are.
This is of crucial importance, the very reason why one educates oneself in the four Buddhist tenets. The essence is to discover what reality is: what the natures of oneself, things and events/ phenomena are, and how exactly they exist.
Correct view here, means understanding the nature of reality/ phenomena/ things and events as they are. Understanding this is so important, this is because, when one has ascertained the correct view of the nature of reality, then one's interaction with reality will also be correct/ valid.
On the basis of Correct view, one will have Correct thought: all of one's problems and sufferings always come from one's distorted perception of reality, going against such perception of reality. Due to this, one suffers.
Therefore, if one wishes to stop problems and sufferings, then one has to stop this wrong concept/ misconception.
The only way to do that is to gain an exact understanding of how things and events exist.
Therefore, this shows that, Correct view is the basis for Correct thought/ perception/ correct interaction with reality.
On the basis of Correct view, one has Correct thought, this leads to Correct speech and Correct aims of actions: whatever verbal and physical actions that one carries out will be realistic and not harmful to others.
This is because, for example, based on Correct thought, one would know what and what not to say, when and when not to say
When one achieves this, then one has Correct aims of actions, which means to live one's life according to the laws of cause and effect. One would abandon non-virtues and cultivate only virtues.
Such [correct actions of body and speech] can only come from Correct thought, which comes from Correct view.
On these bases, Correct livelihood would also follow naturally: one engages correctly in one's livelihood.

One would also put in Correct effort [cultivation]. On the basis of all these [correct paths], one would put in Correct mindfulness. Without the earlier understanding/ realization, it would not be possible to have Correct mindfulness.
Therefore, [every aspect of the Noble Eightfold Path] starts with Correct view, which leads to Correct thought, Correct speech, Correct aims of actions, Correct livelihood, Correct effort. On the basis of these, comes Correct mindfulness.
Without the earlier understanding, it would not be possible to have Correct mindfulness, as one's mind would also be [under the control of discursive thoughts].
Base on Correct mindfulness, comes Correct concentration, which does not refer merely to having any single-pointedness of mind/ concentrating on any object, but refers mainly to the concentration that has selflessness as its object of observation.
Therefore, the entire purpose of developing mindfulness is to develop a single-pointedness of mind, to have that focusing on the ultimate nature of reality, which is selflessness.
The goal is not merely to gain a single-pointedness of mind for the sake of having single-pointedness of mind itself.
Rather, with Correct concentration/ calm abiding/ meditative serenity focusing on selflessness, one would develop special insight. With the realization of special insight, one would then be able to shake/ disturb the afflictive destructive emotions.
This is the distinguishing feature/ hallmark of Buddhist teachings/ the hallmark of Buddhism.

To gain understanding on selflessness, the key is to think deep:

One has to see/ realize/ discover for oneself how extremely important to learn/ educate oneself, especially going deep into the philosophical teachings/ studying the great treatises, by thinking about them.
When one wishes to meditate, one needs to know how and why one meditates/ the purpose of meditation.
The entire point/ most important thing about learning/ educating oneself/ practicing, is to arrive/ discover for oneself, how exactly does oneself/ others/ phenomena exist/ its ultimate nature/ final reality of things and events.
Learning about the nature of reality like what is presented in tenets is not easy at all. Many conditions must gather: hearing the explanations, reading the [root] texts, other commentaries, discussing with your peers, [analyzing and reflecting], etc.
One has to do all of these activities to gain and clarify one's understanding, then increase whatever those that have been ascertained with respect to selflessness.
If one does not think deep enough repeatedly over time, merely engaging in studying and listening alone would not lead one to any understanding.
To understand reality, this is something that requires analysis, looking at the presentation of selflessness from every different angle, using every avenue of reasoning, logic and so forth.
It is only then would one be able to eliminate one's qualms/ lack of understanding/ doubts.

How the Autonomists assert imputed objects:

Among the two divisions of the Middle Way School, those proponents who assert existence by way of its own character are Middle Way Autonomists (<i>Svatantrika Madhyamika</i>). Those who do not assert existence by way of its own character are Middle Way Consequentialists (<i>Prasangika Madhyamika</i>).
Therefore, the main factor that differentiates the Autonomists from the Consequentialists is the Autonomists' belief that all phenomena exist by way of their own characters.
Existence by way of its own character means: when one searches for the imputed object, one would be able to find/ indicate something that is that imputed object.
This is because, the Autonomists assert that all phenomena, such as the person, are findable upon analysis/ looking/ searching
Therefore, persons and all other phenomena exist by way of their own characters.
When one searches for the self / I / person, one would be able to point to something that is the self / I / person.
Therefore, they assert that everything exists by way of its own character.
This is the fundamental premise in how the Autonomists engage reality, that whatever exists can be found.
They assert the <i>mental consciousness</i> to be the illustration of the person.
In essence, they assert that, if it is an existent, it necessarily exists by way of its own character. This is because, when one looks for an imputed object, one would definitely be able to point to something that is the object, therefore, it can be found.

How the Autonomists assert existence and non-existence:

Existent	Non-existent
When one looks for it, one would be able to find it.	When one looks for it, one would <i>not</i> be able to find it.
Both Autonomists and Consequentialists, being proponents of the Middle Way, are the same in not asserting true existence.	
However, the Autonomists assert that true existence and existence by way of its own character do not mean the same thing.	
Whereas, the Consequentialists assert that true existence and existence by way of its own character mean the same thing.	
Why phenomena can only exist conventionally and not ultimately:	
The Autonomists' assertions of true existence can be traced to what Buddha taught in the <i>Descent into the Lanka sutra</i> : <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“All phenomena exist through appearing to consciousness, all phenomena exist conventionally, all phenomena do not exist ultimately.”</i></p>	
Buddha said that all phenomena only exist conventionally, this is because phenomena exist through the force of them appearing to a consciousness.	
Therefore, they assert that all phenomena exist conventionally. Since that is the case, phenomena do not exist ultimately.	
If a phenomenon can exist without being posited through the force of appearing to a consciousness, then such a phenomenon would be ultimately existent.	
The Autonomists assert that: if a phenomenon is established by way of its own uncommon mode of existence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness, then such a phenomenon would exist ultimately/ truly.	
Since there is no phenomenon that is found to be established by way of its own uncommon mode of existence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness, they assert that <i>phenomena do not exist ultimately</i> .	
Therefore, according to them, since phenomena do not exist ultimately, phenomena can only exist conventionally.	
Firstly, one must understand that, for this school, phenomena exist because they are posited through appearing to a consciousness. This is the reason to assert how a phenomenon can exist.	
They assert that, for any phenomenon to exist, it has to be posited/ labeled by mind, which means that such a phenomenon must appear to a mind. Since it appears, it can be posited, therefore, it is an existent.	
Above this, the Autonomists also assert that there must be something from the side of the object/ existence from its own side.	
These two features collectively account for the existence of any phenomenon:	
Therefore, for any phenomenon to exist, it must: 1) <i>Appear to a mind</i> , 2) <i>Exist from its own side</i>	
They do not accept that phenomena are established by way of its own uncommon mode of existence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.	
The quote from <i>Descent into the Lanka sutra</i> states: all phenomena exist because they are posited through the force of appearing to a mind. Essentially, this means that, if a phenomenon exists, then it must appear to a mind.	
This is how one can posit a phenomenon, this is how it becomes an existent, [by first appearing, then posited by a mind.]	
However, what exactly constitutes this mind, is asserted differently by the Autonomists and the Consequentialists. They have different assertions as to what is this mind that, if a phenomenon appears to it, this object can be considered as an existent.	
The Autonomists assert that such a mind has to be a non-defective awareness, which is non-defective by it having the factor of existing by way of its own character. This is because, such an awareness cannot be harmed by reason.	
This is because, anything that exists, necessarily exists by way of its own character.	
Therefore, if it is an existent, such a phenomenon is necessarily posited through the force of it appearing to a non-defective awareness. If the basis/ object of inquiry is not posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness, then such a basis is a non-existent.	

Divisions of the Autonomy Middle Way School:

2. Divisions

There are two divisions: 1. Sutra Middle Way Autonomists (*Skt. Sautrantika-Svatantrika-Madhyamika*) and 2. Yogic Middle Way Autonomists (*Skt. Yogacara-Svatantrika-Madhyamika*).

The definition of a Sutra Middle Way Autonomist is: a Proponent of the Middle Way who propounds a presentation of conventionalities through mostly conforming with the Proponents of Sutra.

The definition of a Yogic Middle Way Autonomist is: a Proponent of the Middle Way who propounds a presentation of conventionalities through mostly conforming with the Proponents of Mind Only.

'Mostly conforming' in both definitions means that they conform most of the time but not always.

How the two truths are asserted differently between the Autonomy Middle Way School and the Mind Only School:

4. Way of asserting objects

Existence by way of its own characteristics, existence from its own side, and inherent existence are equivalent.

Uncompounded space, true cessations, the past and future, and the subtle selflessness of persons are both non-affirming negatives and conventional truths.

Ultimate truth, final reality, and the subtle selflessness of phenomena are equivalent.

There is a difference in the presentation of the two truths between the Autonomy Middle Way School and Mind Only School:

In the Mind Only School, emptiness [of phenomena] and the subtle selflessness of persons are ultimate truths.

However, the Autonomists assert that the subtle selflessness of persons is a conventional truth, whereas the subtle selflessness of phenomena is an ultimate truth, which refers to the emptiness of true existence.

Therefore, for the Autonomists, emptiness and ultimate truth are synonymous, both of which refer to the selflessness of phenomena, the emptiness of true existence.

This means that, for the Autonomists, the subtle selflessness of persons is not an emptiness.

The two truths for the Autonomy Middle Way School are not shown in the root text, this is because, the two truths are essentially the same as the Mind Only School.

[Even though there are differences as shown above, the two truths are defined similarly.]

The Autonomists assert an ultimate truth to be a truth for an ultimate awareness. 'Ultimate' here, can be taken as the ultimate awareness itself, which refers to the meditative equipoise of a Superior being, the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness.

In the Tibetan phrase: '*don dam par*', '*don*' by itself means 'object', '*dam*' here means 'final/ ultimate'. Therefore, here '*don dam*' means ultimate/ final object. '*Dam par*' here, means the meditative equipoise of a Superior being.

Therefore, '*don dam par*' would mean: the object, which is emptiness, of the meditative equipoise of a Superior.

Ultimate truth in Tibetan is '*don dam bden par*', '*bden par*' means 'Truth'. Since '*don*' is 'object', here, it refers to emptiness. This is the object of the mind of meditative equipoise of a Superior.

In essence, emptiness is the ultimate truth in this school. Since that is the case, all phenomena other than emptiness are conventional truths.

Even though emptiness is an ultimate truth, emptiness does not exist ultimately, this is because, emptiness can only exist conventionally. This is because, emptiness can only be *posited* through the force of appearing to an awareness.

Therefore, if it is an existent, it is necessarily not an ultimate existent, this is because, it necessarily exists conventionally.

Therefore, one needs to differentiate between an “emptiness/ ultimate truth/ ultimate reality”, **and** “ultimately existent”: although emptiness is an ultimate truth, it does not exist ultimately/ not an ultimate existent.

This is because, all existents, which include emptiness, have to exist conventionally. This is because, they assert that nothing can exist without being *posited* through the force of appearing to a mind.

If it is *posited* through the force of appearing to a mind, that means that it exists conventionally and does not exist ultimately.

Assertions of sense objects, object-possessors and selflessness:

Sutra Middle Way Autonomists assert that the five sense objects – forms and so forth – are different entities from consciousness and that they are gross external objects composed of partless particles.

Yogic Middle Way Autonomists assert that the five sense objects – forms and so forth – are one entity with the consciousness apprehending them.

5. Way of asserting object-possessors

The mental consciousness is asserted to be the illustration of the person. They assert a collection of six consciousnesses. There are two types of awarenesses: 1. valid cognizers and 2. non-valid cognizers.

There are two types of valid cognizers:

1. direct valid cognizers and 2. inferential valid cognizers.

Sutra Middle Way Autonomists do not assert self-cognizing direct perceivers.

Yogic Middle Way Autonomists assert all four types of direct perceivers. Self-cognizing direct perceivers and yogic direct perceivers are necessarily non-mistaken consciousnesses, while the other two, [sense direct perceivers and mental direct perceivers,] can be either mistaken or non-mistaken.

6. Way of asserting selflessness

The person being empty of being permanent, unitary, and independent is asserted to be a coarse selflessness of persons, while the person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent is a subtle selflessness of persons.

Yogic Middle Way Autonomists assert that a form and the cognizer apprehending that form being empty of being different substances is a coarse selflessness of phenomena. All phenomena being empty of true existence is asserted to be the subtle selflessness of phenomena.

How the two selflessness and 'selves' are differentiated:

The two [subtle] selflessnesses are differentiated by way of the object of negation and not by way of the basis of the emptiness because the refutation of the object of negation – true existence – upon the basis of a person is the subtle selflessness of phenomena, while the refutation of self-sufficient substantial existence upon the basis of a person is the subtle selflessness of persons.
The two conceptions of self are differentiated by way of the mode of apprehension and not by way of the observed object because through observing the basis – the person – and apprehending it to be truly existent it is a conception of a self of phenomena, and through observing the basis – the person – and apprehending it to be self-sufficient substantially existent it is a conception of a self of persons.

Non-defective awareness is necessarily a valid cognizer-

SQ: The non-defective awareness is a consciousness that exist by way of its own character, this is because it cannot be harmed by reasoning. Since a wrong consciousness is also established by way of its own character, how is that a non-defective awareness?
KR: A non-defective awareness cannot refer to any mind. It specifically refers to valid cognizers. This is because, one cannot assert that, for example, when a mirage appears to an eye consciousness, then a mirage is asserted to exist. Therefore, a non-defective awareness, besides the explanations given earlier, also refers specifically to a valid cognizer.
Phenomena are posited through them appearing to a non-defective awareness. Since a phenomenon appears to a non-defective awareness, therefore, it is posited to exist. Therefore, the 'positor' here is the mind to which the phenomenon is appearing to, and a non-defective awareness.
Therefore, one cannot say that this non-defective awareness is all types of mind. It has to be a valid awareness.

How the Middle Way School is more profound than the Mind Only School:

SQ: Both the Mind Only School and Autonomy Middle Way School assert that: 1) object exist by way of its own character and 2) relying on a consciousness to impute it for it to exist. Then how is the Autonomy Middle Way School more subtle in its assertions in this respect compared to the Mind Only School?
KR: Although the Mind Only School asserts that phenomena are in the nature of the mind, nevertheless, they assert that phenomena such as the mind itself are truly existent/ truly established, even though they do not assert external object.
Since that is the case, one still needs a method to deal with the destructive emotions such as anger or attachment that has the mind as its focus. Merely having the concept of no external object cannot harm the attachment to mental pleasurable feelings.
This is because, this example of the pleasurable mental feelings are truly existent.
Therefore, here, ascertaining the mind to be truly existent/ truly established cannot help to deal with attachment of the mind to pleasurable sensations, for example.
Whereas, ascertaining that even the mind is not truly existent does help [in dealing with the afflictions of the mind as its focus.] Therefore, the Autonomists' position is more powerful.
This is because, even though the Mind Only School's assertion of phenomena to be in the entity of mind helps to deal with [misconceptions of] objects other than mind, ultimately, they still apprehend truly existent mind. Therefore, afflictions based on that may arise.
The Autonomists not only assert that phenomena other than mind are not truly existent, they also assert the mind itself is not truly existent. In this sense, it is more powerful.
Therefore, the Autonomists can explain how the mind does not exist in the way it appears. Even though it appears as truly existent, this is not how the mind exists.
Nevertheless, the most profound explanation about emptiness of true existence comes only from the Consequent Middle Way School, they are able to assert that all phenomena exist as merely imputed by thought/ mind/ exist in mere name.
Therefore, one can actually discern the difference between the presentations of the Mind Only School and the Middle Way School, the latter being more profound in that, not only are phenomena other than mind are not truly existent, even the mind itself is not truly existent. This is definitely more profound than the Mind Only School.
Within the Middle Way School, the difference between the Autonomists and the Consequentialists is even more difficult to distinguish in terms of understanding and experience.

SQ: When dualistic appearance arises, do all three: 1) appearance of external object 2) appearance of subject and object 3) appearance of conventional phenomena, have to arise together simultaneously?

KR: Any of these three examples can be posited to be a dualistic appearance, a dualistic appearance need not be all three. These three are totally different phenomena from each other.

KQ: If all three must be present for it to be considered as a dualistic appearance, then what would be the fallacy?

K: An appearance of external object is necessarily always there, as all sense consciousnesses are necessarily mistaken.

[If all three appearances must be present to be considered as dualistic appearance, then it would follow that, the appearance of an external blue alone is not a dualistic appearance. If the appearance of an external blue is not a dualistic appearance, then it follows that external blue is non-dualistic with the mind. Since the mind is truly existent, then it follows that external blue is also truly existent, which means it is not an object of abandonment.]

Meaning of existence by way of its own character:

Establishment by way of its own character: When an imputed object is sought, it is <i>findable</i> .
<i>No</i> establishment by way of its own character: When an imputed object is sought, it is <i>not findable</i> .
All the schools from the Middle Way Autonomists and below, assert that an object exists from its own side, when it is being sought, there is something that one can indicate/ call/ find as the object.
Such an appearance of the object is coming from the side of the object. [Object exists in the way it appears.]
This would also include the self / I / person, when it is being sought, one would be able to find it. For the Autonomists, the person is found to be the mental consciousness.
Quite a few tenets also assert that the person is the mental consciousness, which is that which moves on from life to life.
It is stated very clearly from the writings of the master Bhavaviveka, the trailblazer of the Middle Way Autonomists, that the mental consciousness is the self / I / person.
This is merely the assertion of the Middle Way Autonomists, that the mental consciousness is the 'I'. However, in reality, the mental consciousness is not the 'I', especially from the perspective of the Consequent Middle Way School.
This view of the Autonomists is essentially based on their fundamental assertion that phenomenon exists by way of its own character. Therefore, one necessarily must indicate/ find something which is that phenomena being inquired.
It is extremely difficult to realize what exactly is the self / I / person: there is an 'I' that wishes to be happy and not suffer.
What exactly is this 'I', is the main object of inquiry for all the Buddhist tenets, as all of them are attempting to explain what this self / I / person is all about. Due to not knowing exactly what it is, all the problems and sufferings come.
Every single difficulty and suffering come from not knowing that. When a correct understanding dawns, then all the problems would vanish.

Autonomists' assertion of true existence:

The Autonomists do not assert true existence because they are the proponent of the Middle Way.
Taking the quotation from <i>Descent into the Lanka sutra</i> as the source (see page 72), the Autonomists assert that something exists because it appears to a mind. Thus, it can be posited to exist. Without appearing, it cannot be posited as an existent.
Based on this quotation, they assert something is an existent because it appears to an awareness, this is why it exists.
The opposite of this would be true existence: if there is something that can exist without appearing, then such an object would be truly existent. Therefore, for something to be an existent, it has to appear to an awareness.
The Autonomists assert that, anything that exists, has to be posited through it appearing to a non-defective awareness.
A Non-defective awareness has these two features: 1) A mind that is not affected by adventitious/ temporary causes of error. 2) It is not mistaken with objects appearing as existing by way of their own characters
In essence, for them, if it is an existent, it has to be posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.
Therefore, true existence means: establishment by way of its own uncommon mode of existence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.

Yogic Autonomy Middle Way School:

The Yogic Middle Way Autonomists have views that mostly conform with the Mind Only School: 1) They do not assert external objects 2) Assert self-knowers. Therefore, a proponent of the Middle Way who does not assert external objects but assert self-knowers are Yogic Middle Way Autonomists.
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An illustrations of a proponent of the Yogic Middle Way Autonomists would be the Great Indian master Shantarakshita.
He was invited to Tibet around the 7 th or 8 th century, during the reign of <i>King Tritsong</i> Detsen at the time when they were building the first monastery, Samye monastery. It was he who introduced the lineage of ordination into Tibet.
It was said that this Great master Shantarakshita was the architect who designed the layout of this monastery.

Sutra Autonomy Middle Way School:

The Sutra Middle Way Autonomists have views that mostly conform with the Sutra School: 1) They assert external objects 2) Do not assert self-knowers. Therefore, a proponent of the Middle Way who asserts external object exist by way of its own character and do not assert self-knowers are Sutra Middle Way Autonomists.
The trailblazer of the Sutra Autonomy Middle Way School is the Great Indian master Bhavaviveka, who was born in South India. He became a monk and a great scholar in Nalanda monastery, established over fifty temples and in doing so, helped spread the teachings.
He wrote a commentary on Nagajuna's <i>Fundamental Wisdom</i> as a refutation of Buddhapalita's <i>Prasangika</i> commentary on the <i>Fundamental Wisdom</i> .
In so doing, he established the Autonomy Middle Way's view to be correct and assert that the <i>Prasangika's</i> explanation is incorrect. Therefore, his commentary was meant to show that Nagajuna's <i>Fundamental Wisdom's</i> intention was according to the Autonomy Middle Way School's view.

Presentation of the two truths:

The presentation of the two truths according to the Middle Way Autonomists is similar to the Mind Only School.
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Way of asserting selflessness:

The Autonomy Middle Way School assert selflessness of persons in the same way as the lower tenets.
The Yogic Middle Way Autonomists assert that a form and the cognizer apprehending that form being empty of being different substances is a coarse selflessness of phenomena. All phenomena being empty of true existence is asserted to be the subtle selflessness of phenomena. Therefore, they divide the selflessness of phenomena into coarse and subtle.
They distinguish between coarse and subtle selflessness of person as well as coarse and subtle selflessness of phenomena.
The difference is not made by way of the basis of emptiness but by way of the object of negation.
KQ: What are the fallacies if the two selflessnesses are made by way of the bases of emptiness?
[This would absurdly follow that the basis of the person being empty of true existence and the basis of the same person lacking self-sufficient, substantially existence would be two different persons.]

Yogic Middle Way Autonomists' assertions of the lineages of the three vehicles:

7. Presentation of the grounds and paths According to Yogic Middle Way Autonomists the differences between the persons of the three vehicles are posited in terms of three different obscurations that are the main objects of abandonment and three different views that are the main objects of meditation. Those of the hearer lineage, having taken the conception apprehending [the person] to be self-sufficient substantially existent together with its retinue as their main object of abandonment, through taking, as the antidote to that, the view realizing the person to be empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent as their main object of meditation, attain the small enlightenment.
The three vehicles are the Hearers', Solitary Realizers' and Bodhisattvas' vehicles.
Yogic Middle Way Autonomists assertion of the Hearers' lineage:
The main object of meditation is the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person. The main object of abandonment is the conception apprehending a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.
Through meditating on the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, the Hearers abandon the conception apprehending a self-sufficient, substantially existent person. Through this, they achieve a small/ Hearers' enlightenment.
Those of the solitary realizer lineage, having taken the conception apprehending a form and the valid cognizer apprehending that form to be different substances as their main object of abandonment, through taking, as the antidote to that, the view realizing apprehenders and apprehendeds to be empty of being different substances as their main object of meditation, attain the middling enlightenment.

Yogic Middle Way Autonomists assertion of the Solitary Realizers' lineage:
The main object of meditation is the emptiness of object and subject being different substances. The main object of abandonment is the conception apprehending form the valid cognizer apprehending form to be of different substances.
Through meditation on the object of meditation, they abandon the object of abandonment and achieve the middling/ Solitary Realizers' enlightenment.
Bodhisattvas, having taken the conception of true existence together with its latencies as their main object of abandonment, through taking, as the antidote to that, the view realizing all phenomena to be lacking true existence as their main object of meditation, attain the great enlightenment.
Yogic Middle Way Autonomists assertion of the Bodhisattvas' lineage:
The main object of meditation is the emptiness of true existence. The main object of abandonment is the conception of true existence. The resultant fruit is the Great/ Full enlightenment.
According to the Yogic Middle Way Autonomists, there are differences between the persons of the three vehicles, which are posited in terms of different obscurations that are the main object of abandonment. Therefore, there are differences in their main object of meditation.

Sutra Middle Way Autonomists assertions of the lineages of the three vehicles:

According to Sutra Middle Way Autonomists there is no difference between hearers and solitary realizers regarding their main objects of abandonment and main objects of meditation because they are similar in taking the afflictive obscurations as their main objects of abandonment, and they are also similar in taking the selflessness of persons as their main object of meditation.

Sutra Middle Way Autonomists assertion of the Hearers and Solitary Realizers' lineages:

The Sutra Middle Way Autonomists are similar to the Sutra School in that they assert external objects.

Due to this, they do not assert emptiness of objects and subjects as different substances.

The Sutra Middle Way Autonomists assert that the main object of meditation of the Hearers and Solitary Realizers is the selflessness of persons, whereas the main object of abandonment are the afflictive obscurations.

However, there is a reason why there is a difference in the results of those two in terms of inferiority and superiority. It is because there is a difference in terms of the amount of merit accumulated and the length of time [spent accumulating that merit].

The Autonomists' assertions of interpretive and definitive sutras:

The Autonomists are similar to the Proponents of Mind Only in asserting two types of sutras – Great Vehicle sutras and Lesser Vehicle sutras – and in asserting two parts to sutras – the definitive and interpretive.

KR: How are the Hinayana and Mahayana sutras differentiated?

[The two are differentiated by whether there are assertions of: 1) Selflessness of phenomena, 2) Bodhicitta, 3) Four Bodies of Buddha and 4) Presentation of the ten Bodhisattva grounds.]

Within the three turnings of the dharma, the sutras of the first turning are uncommon Hinayana sutras. The second turning consists of uncommon Mahayana sutras. The third turning is said to contain sutras that are common/ shared between the Hinayana and Mahayana sutras.

According to the Yogic Middle Way Autonomists, the sutras of the first and third turnings are sutras of interpretive meaning, whereas the second turning consists of both sutras of interpretive meaning and definitive meaning.

According the Middle Way Autonomists, the *Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* is a sutra that belongs to the second turning that is a sutra of interpretive meaning.

They assert that the *Short, Middling and Extensive Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* are sutras of the second turning that are of definitive meaning.

They assert that the *Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra* is of interpretive meaning. This is because, they assert this sutra cannot be read literally as there will be many fallacies for them.

This is because, there are many references there that indicate phenomena to be empty of inherent existence.

Since the Autonomists have asserted that phenomena do exist inherently, therefore, if they were to take this sutra literally, then they would have to accept that phenomena *do not* exist inherently.

However, they accept that the *Short, Middling and Extensive Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* are sutras of definitive meaning.

This is because, in those sutras, there are qualifications of the word 'ultimately' being added whenever there are references to phenomena being empty of inherent existence. Therefore, they are able to assert that ultimately, phenomena are not inherently existent:

In this context, the first and third turnings of the wheel [of Dharma] are sutras of interpretive meaning, while the middle [turning of the wheel of Dharma] has both parts – interpretive and definitive – because those in which the qualification of 'ultimately' is applied to the object of negation are asserted to be sutras of definitive meaning, while those of the middle turning of the wheel, in which it is not applied, are asserted to be sutras of interpretive meaning.

SQ: How do the Sutra Middle Way Autonomists assert partless particles?

KR: They assert partless particles, however, they do not assert directionally partless particles.

[In general,] proponents of the Middle Way assert that, if it is an existent, it necessarily possess parts. Therefore, partless particles are not partless because they do possess parts.

Lesson 22

30 May 2013

General Q&A:

SQ: *Root text page 22 - The two conceptions of self are differentiated by way of the mode of apprehension and not by way of the observed object. What is the observed object?*

KR: The two conceptions of, self of persons and self of phenomena, are differentiated by way of their respective modes of apprehension and not due to their observed objects.

This is because, through observing the basis, the person, and apprehending it to be truly existent, is a conception of a self of phenomena, and through observing the basis, the person, and apprehending it to be self-sufficient substantially existent it is a conception of a self of persons.

Therefore, the prove here, is given on the basis of one observed object, the person. In relation to the person, depending on the mode of apprehension, then this could either be a conception of a self of person or a conception of a self of phenomena.

These two different conceptions, have the same observed object, which is the person.

However, the mind which apprehends the person to be truly existent becomes the conception of a self of phenomena.

Apprehending the same observed object, the person, to be self-sufficient, substantially existent, make such an apprehension a conception of a self of person.

Therefore, the conceptions of a self of person and a conception of a self of phenomena are different, whereas here, the observed object, the person, is the same.

SQ: *For the Autonomists, how is it possible to achieve liberation when a Hearer still has conception of true existence, which means there are still afflictions? This would mean that the Autonomists' Hearer arhat is actually not an arhat.*

SR: To attain liberation, one does not need to abandon the conception of that which is established by way of its uncommon mode of subsistence without being posited through the force of appearing to a non-defective awareness.

One merely needs to abandon a person being self-sufficient, substantially existent. Therefore, for the Autonomists, there is no need to abandon apprehension of true existence to attain liberation.

KR: For the Autonomists, although they assert that by abandoning the conception of self-sufficient, substantially existent person, a Hearer would achieve liberation, however, they are still harmed by the conception of true existence.

Firstly, one has to be clear about each tenets' presentation of the self of persons and self of phenomena. Secondly, one has also got to be clear about their respective presentations of afflictive obscuration and knowledge obscuration.

All the tenets are the same in asserting that, to become a foe destroyer, one necessarily needs to destroy the afflictions.

However, what actually constitutes afflictions are asserted differently among them.

From the perspective of the Sutra Autonomy Middle Way School, they posit an afflictive obscuration to be the conception of a self of person, the root being the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person and the afflictions that are produced by such a conception. Such a conception is the most subtle affliction that can exist.

Since the main afflictive obscuration is the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, therefore, the mind realizing the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person would be its direct antidote.

Therefore, one has to firstly generate the realization of the emptiness of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person, one then familiarizes such a realization [repeatedly].

Through the force of that, one is said to be able to destroy the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.

Once such a conception is destroyed, one achieves a status of a foe destroyer/ arhat.

When one achieves a status of a foe destroyer and becomes an arhat, the afflictions, together with their seeds, are destroyed.
Once this occurs, according to them, it is impossible for such a person to experience any more afflictions.
When one becomes a foe destroyer, such a person has overcome/ destroyed/ abandoned all the afflictions completely.
However, even though such a person has abandoned all the afflictions, he has yet to realize the emptiness of true existence.
Therefore, such a person still has the conception of true existence in his continuum.
Nevertheless, there is no fault in asserting that the arhat has abandoned all the afflictions, that he does not have anymore afflictions. Therefore, from their perspective, the conception is not posited to be an afflictive obscuration.
SQ: <i>How would they explain the appearance and conception of true existence to not generate afflictions?</i>
KR: They would reply that the root of attachment is conceiving the person to be self-sufficient, substantially existent. Once this is destroyed, one would not have any attachment nor afflictions.
SQ: <i>Why do the Yogic Autonomists assert a coarse self of phenomena?</i>
KR: It is clear that the Hinayana tenets do not assert a self of phenomena whereas the Mahayana tenets do, which means they also assert a selflessness of phenomena.
The Mind Only School, the first of Mahayana tenets, only posit a subtle self of phenomena, which is a conception of subject and object as different substances. This is the most subtle conception of self of phenomena for them.
For the Autonomy Middle Way School, this is not a single Autonomists who posits that a conception of object and subject as being different substances to be the subtle self of phenomena. All of them posit the conception of true existence to be the subtle self of phenomena.
However, the Yogic Autonomists do assert that there is conception of object and subject as different entities.
For them, this is a conception of a coarse conception of a self of phenomena.
This is because, just like the Mind Only School, the Yogic Autonomists do not assert external object.
Therefore, with respect to the conception of object and subject as different substances, the Yogic Autonomy Middle Way School considers this to be a conception of a self of phenomena, but not a conception of a subtle self of phenomena.
Since that is the case, it would make such a conception a conception of a coarse self of phenomena.
Then the question may arise as to why the Sutra Autonomy Middle Way School do not assert a coarse self of phenomena.
This is because, they are similar to the Sutra School in asserting external object. Since that is the case, the Sutra Autonomists do not assert an object of abandonment that is a conception of object and subject as being different substances.
Since they do not assert such a conception, therefore, they do not assert a self of phenomena other than a subtle self of phenomena.
SQ: <i>For the Mind Only School, can a non-mistaken consciousness view phenomena dualistically?</i>
KR: The definition of a conventional truth for the Mind Only School and Autonomy Middle Way School is, “That which is realized by the direct valid cognizer directly realizing it by way of being <i>together</i> with dualistic appearance.”
The direct valid cognizer is necessarily non-mistaken. However, a conventional truth is an object that is realized with dualistic appearance. Therefore a non-mistaken consciousness can be non-mistaken.
KQ: For the Mind Only School, they assert four types of direct perceivers: sense, mental, self-knowing and yogic direct perceivers. For them, the self-knowing and yogic direct perceivers are necessarily non-mistaken.
Therefore, a self-knower would also necessarily be non-mistaken. Self-knowing direct perceivers have consciousnesses as their objects. Since consciousness is a conventional truth, which is realized with dualistic appearance by a direct valid cognizer directly realizing it, do self-knowing direct perceivers have dualistic appearances?
Is the valid cognizer that directly realizes a consciousness a self-knowing direct valid cognizer? What is it the one would posit to be the direct valid cognizer that directly realizes consciousness?
SR: Can one posit a clairvoyant directly knowing another's mind?
KQ: Would a clairvoyant directly knowing another's mind have dualistic appearance?
SQ: <i>For the Mind Only School, can a dream elephant not appear as an external object?</i>
KR: It is possible to have an appearance of an external elephant in a dream. When one dreams, the dream object can appear as coming from the side of the object. Therefore, it is possible to have an appearance of external elephant in a dream.

SQ: <i>What are the common refutations of the Mind Only School's assertion of true existence by the Autonomy Middle Way School other than asserting that it is not realized by a valid cognizer?</i>
KR: The Mind Only School asserts true existence mainly with respect to Other-powered phenomena. The Middle Way School refutes that.
This is because, the positing of Other-powered phenomena has its root in the mind. For the Middle Way School, the mind is not truly existent.
The Middle Way School's refutation of true existence includes all phenomena. For them, everything that exists does not exist truly. In particular, this is a refutation of the Mind Only School's view that the mind is truly existent.
This is because, the Mind Only School asserts that many things are truly existent, especially the mind.
They consider that true existence to be, that phenomena are not merely imputed by thought but exist from their own sides.
However, in general, the Middle Way School asserts that phenomena are imputed by mind and therefore, do not exist truly.
This means that, for the Middle Way School: There is not a single phenomenon that can exist without being merely imputed by mind.
However, the Autonomists explain phenomena's existence as merely imputed by mind, to necessarily be posited through the force of them appearing to a consciousness/ non-defective awareness.
Therefore, phenomena cannot exist without them appearing to a consciousness. This is <i>their</i> meaning of imputation by mind.
The Autonomists assert that, if there is anything that one can indicate to be established by way of its uncommon mode of existence/ from its own side, without it appearing to a non-defective awareness, then such a phenomenon is truly existent.
However, they assert that there is <i>not</i> a phenomenon that can exist in such a way: from its own side/ under its own power/ from its own uncommon mode of existence, without them appearing to a consciousness. Such a phenomenon does not exist.
This is because, if one were to assert true existence, then they would have a list of system of reasoning to refute this.
Such an assertion of the Autonomy Middle Way School is a refutation of the Mind Only School's position that: True existence is not merely imputed by thought but existing from its own side.

Lesson 24

6 June 2013

The seven outlines of the Consequent Middle Way School:

The explanation of the Consequence School (<i>Skt. Prasangika</i>) has seven outlines, as before.
1. Definition
The definition of a Consequentialist is: a Proponent of the Middle Way who, by way of accepting just other-approved consequences, does not assert true existence even conventionally.
2. Divisions
Examples [of Consequentialists] are Buddhapalita, Chandrakirti, and Shantideva.
3. Etymology
There is a reason why Acharya Buddhapalita is called a 'Consequentialist.' He is called such due to asserting that an inferential cognizer realizing a thesis is generated in the continuum of an opponent just by [stating] consequences.

What is a Consequentialist:

The etymology of 'Consequentialist' or <i>Prasangika</i> is this: a Consequentialist is one who is able to cause an opponent to generate an inferential cognizer realizing a thesis merely by stating a consequential argument/ statement the opponent makes.
The Consequentialist states that, for an opponent to generate an inferential cognizer realizing a thesis, it is not always necessary to cause that realization by stating a reason/ proof.
All he needs to do sometimes, is merely to state a mere illogical consequence of the opponent's position.
Take an example of a consequence put forth by a Consequentialist towards an opponent of the Autonomist School: <i>"It follows that the subject, a sprout, is not produced in dependence upon its own cause, because it is inherently existent."</i>
It is said that the opponent, merely by hearing such a consequence being put forth, can realize that there is an internal contradiction in their own position. In the process, the opponent may come to realize the emptiness of inherent existence.
The Consequentialists state that, for an opponent to generate an inferential cognizer realizing a thesis, 1) it is not necessary to state a thesis that is commonly agreed upon by both parties, nor 2) is it always necessary to state a reason.

Historical sequence that gave rise to the Consequent Middle Way School:

The root source of the Consequence school came from <i>Nagajuna Father and Son</i> , Nagajuna and his spiritual son Aryadeva. Nagajuna composed the <i>Fundamental Treatise on Wisdom</i> .
However, in stating the <i>Madhyamika</i> view, they did not employ consequences. They merely established the general procedure of the <i>Madhyamika</i> .
Later, <i>Acharya Buddhapalita</i> commented on Nagajuna's <i>Fundamental Wisdom</i> in which he employed extensively the use of consequences in explaining Nagajuna's thoughts.
Still later, Bhavaviveka came along and disagreed with Buddhapalita's <i>commentary</i> on Nagajuna's <i>Fundamental Wisdom</i> .
He took aim at Buddhapalita's mere use of consequences to establish the view of selflessness and asserted that autonomous reasons/ proofs are necessary to cause an opponent to generate an inference realizing selflessness.
He did this with a few commentaries on Nagajuna's <i>Fundamental Wisdom</i> through the use of autonomous reasons.
Through this, Bhavaviveka became the trailblazer of the Autonomy Middle Way School by disagreeing with Buddhapalita's commentary on Nagajuna's thought that selflessness is realized by merely depending on consequences.
Later, the great master Chandrakirti, in one of his famous commentaries called <i>Clear Words</i> , upheld Buddhapalita's position that an opponent can be caused to generate inference realizing the thesis merely through stating consequences.
<i>Clear Words</i> affirmed Buddhapalita's mode of explaining Nagajuna's <i>Fundamental Wisdom</i> and stated clearly that Buddhapalita's commentary was exactly in accord with the intent of Nagajuna.
It also stated that the use of autonomous reasons to generate an inference realizing a thesis in an opponent is incorrect by elucidating clearly that the position of the <i>Prasangika</i> is the valid one, whereas the assertions of the <i>Svatantrika</i> is invalid.
Due to this, most scholars attribute Chandrakirti to be the trailblazer of the <i>Prasangika Madhyamika</i> .
Nevertheless, other scholars attribute Buddhapalita to be the trailblazer of the <i>Prasangika</i> instead of Chandrakirti.

Asserting Hidden and Manifest objects:

4. Way of asserting objects

There are two types of objects: 1. hidden objects and 2. manifest objects.

Objects that are necessarily realized in dependence on a reason are posited as hidden objects, and objects that can be ascertained by an ordinary person [one that has yet to realize emptiness] through the force of experience without depending on a reason are posited as manifest objects.

Illustrations of manifest objects are, for example, a pot and a woollen cloth. Perceptible object and manifest object are equivalent.

Whether it is a cup or pot, such objects do not need to be proven to be what they are. One merely experiences it to realize it.

Among the objects of the five senses, visual forms are objects of the eye consciousness, sounds that of the ear consciousness, smells that of the nose consciousness, taste that of the tongue consciousness and tactility that of the body consciousness.

Such objects are obviously manifest objects, one need not depend on a reason to realize them but merely experience them.

Unlike hidden objects, manifest objects are such that, to realize them, one does not necessarily need to depend on a reason.

Nevertheless, there are exceptions where one can provide examples to analyze about this and that, but in general, such objects need not be realized through the force of reason.

Illustrations of hidden objects are impermanence of sound and the emptiness of sound being truly existent. To realize the impermanence or the emptiness of sound, one has to depend on a reason, without which, there is no way to realize it.

The Consequentialists assert that, if it exists, it is necessarily either a hidden or a manifest object. There is nothing that is both a hidden and manifest object. Therefore, this makes these two objects mutually exclusive.

Among hidden objects, there are hidden and extremely hidden objects. Examples of the latter are the subtle details of karma and the existence of Buddha's pure lands, which are enormous and numberless.

Extremely hidden objects can only be realized in dependence on scriptural citation/ testimony. In dependence on that, one generates the inferential cognizer through believe. This is how one understands extremely hidden objects.

For the Consequentialists, manifest and hidden objects are mutually exclusive, however, the lower schools like the Sutra School defines manifest objects as 'objects that are explicitly realized by a *direct* valid cognizer', and hidden objects are 'objects that are explicitly realized by an *inferential* valid cognizer'.

According to the lower schools, due to their understanding of what constitutes hidden objects, that which are explicitly realized by an inferential valid cognizer. Therefore, this means all phenomena are hidden objects [for the lower schools. This means that, they are not mutually exclusive but has something which is both.]

Asserting the Two Truths:

Another way of dividing objects is into: 1. conventional truths and 2. ultimate truths.

The definition of being a conventional truth is:

[1] an object that is found by a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality and [2] with respect to which that valid cognizer analyzing the conventionality becomes a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality.

There is a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality, there can also be a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate.

Simply stated: A conventional truth is the final/ main object of a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality; an ultimate truth is the final/ main object of a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate.

For the Consequentialists, an ultimate truth is merely the emptiness of true existence, which has no truth that is higher and more exalted than that. All existents other than this, is a conventional truth.

Stating the need for two portions of the definition of a conventional truth:

If the definition of a conventional truth were analyzed from the perspective of a sentient being, then the first portion of the definition will suffice: *an object that is found by a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality.*

The second portion of the definition is to cater for Buddha's simultaneous direct perception of the two truths:

Such a situation would render the omniscient mind to be both a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality and simultaneously a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate.

However, there is not a phenomenon that is [realized by] both these two valid cognizers, as a vase is only a conventional truth and never an ultimate truth.

However, someone might then say: "A vase is an ultimate truth. This is because, it is the final object that is distinguished by a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate." One would then have to assert that it is merely a conventional truth.

The opponent may say: "It follows that the vase is the final object of the valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate. This is because, it is an object of comprehension of a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate."

Similarly, if the definition of an ultimate truth is merely: "*an object found by a valid cognizer realizing an ultimate*", then an ultimate truth would not necessarily be limited only to emptiness.

The question therefore is this: If it is *an object found by a valid cognizer realizing an ultimate*, is it necessarily only an emptiness?

If the definition of an ultimate truth is merely that, then it would follow that one can posit any existents [to be an ultimate truth] and not necessarily merely emptiness to be the object that is found by a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate.

If the definitions of the two truths are merely the first portions, then all phenomena are the objects that are found by a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate; likewise, all phenomena also become the objects that are found by a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality.

This becomes clear when someone states: "The subject, the Buddha's omniscient mind realizing emptiness, is a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate, is also a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality."

Therefore, [if the second portions of the two truths are missing, then it will follow that,] all phenomena are the objects that are found by a valid cognizer distinguishing an ultimate.

This is because, all phenomena are the objects found by the Buddha's omniscient mind.

Likewise, all phenomena are also the objects that are found by a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality.

This is because, for the Buddha's omniscient mind perceiving all conventionalities, all phenomena [including emptiness, would] become the objects that are found by this mind.

Once the Buddha's valid cognizer is brought into the scheme of things, then merely defining the two truths as the objects that are found by their valid cognizers distinguishing an ultimate and a conventionality respectively alone would not suffice.

Therefore, the [full] definition of a conventional truth is posited as: [1] an object that is found by a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality and [2] with respect to which that valid cognizer distinguishing the conventionality becomes a valid cognizer distinguishing a conventionality.

Difference between real and unreal conventional truths:

It is inadmissible to divide conventional truths into two – real conventional truths and unreal conventional truths – because there are no real conventional truths. This is so because if it is a conventional truth, it is necessarily not real. This is so because if it is a conventional truth, it is necessarily unreal. [i.e., a falsity]. It is admissible to divide conventional truths into two – real and unreal – relative to the perspective of a worldly consciousness

Unlike the Autonomists, the Consequentialists do not divide conventional truths into real conventional truths and unreal conventional truths. This is because, there are no real conventional truths.

This is because, if it is a conventional truth, it is necessarily unreal, which means it is a falsity. In essence, there are no real conventional truths.

Nevertheless, with respect to the perspectives of worldly consciousnesses, relative to them, conventional truths can be divided into the real and unreal.

because a form, relative to the perspective of a worldly consciousness, is real, while the reflection of a face in a mirror [being a face], relative to the perspective of a worldly consciousness, is unreal.

Worldly here, refers to one who has *yet to realize emptiness*. In the perspective of such a person, a form is real.

In the perspective of such a worldly consciousness, everything that appears, appears as existing by way of its own character, existing truly, existing inherently.

Therefore, not only is there an appearance, this consciousness also *assents* to the appearance: thinking, agreeing and assuming that this is how things exist exactly [in the way they appear].

In this sense, in the perspective of such a consciousness, everything is real in that it exists in the way it appears.

Therefore, [taking the example of] form, it is a real conventional truth to the perspective of a worldly consciousness, however

If it is real relative to the perspective of a worldly consciousness, it does not necessarily exist because truly existent forms are [real with respect to a worldly consciousness but do not exist].

The reflection of a face in a mirror [to be a face] is an unreal conventional truth in the perspective of a worldly consciousness, because, even for one who has yet to realize emptiness, can realize that the reflection of a face in a mirror is not the actual face.

Therefore, this person does realize the disparity between how it appears and how it exists. This is an example of an unreal conventional truth relative to the perspective of a worldly consciousness.

Nevertheless, there can be disparities between how it appears and how it exists, that this person does not realize, and accepts that it exists in the way it appears. Therefore, such phenomena are real conventional truths [to such a perspective.]

KQ: Do real conventional truths exist? No. Do unreal conventional truths exist? Yes, like the reflection of a face in a mirror is a falsity/ an unreal conventional truth.

The definition of being an ultimate truth is: an object found by a valid cognizer distinguishing the ultimate and with respect to which that valid cognizer distinguishing the ultimate becomes a valid cognizer distinguishing the ultimate. The divisions [of ultimate truths] are similar to those in the context of the Proponents of Mind Only, however in this context it is asserted that true cessations are necessarily ultimate truths.

Consequentialists' assertion of 'self / I / person':

5. Way of asserting object-possessors

The mere I that is imputed in dependence on the five aggregates is asserted to be the illustration of the person. Person is necessarily a non-associated compositional factor.

With the exception of the Consequentialists, all lower schools assert that phenomenon exist inherently: when one looks for an object, one would definitely be able to find something that one can indicate to be the object.

This is the meaning of the phrase: an imputed object when sought, is findable.

Some of these lower schools assert that [the person] is the body while the majority assert it to be the mind.

However, the Consequentialists refute these: the person cannot be the body nor the mind. When one looks for the person, one would ultimately not be able to find the person when one looks for it, yet, the person exists.

Therefore, in the final analysis, the person is none other than that which is merely imputed in dependence upon the five aggregates, there is nothing beyond that. This is how the 'self / I / person' exists.

For the Consequentialists, the person is a non associated compositional factor which is neither form nor consciousness.

How the Consequentialists' assertions of valid cognizers are differentiated from the lower tenets:

There are two types of awarenesses: 1. valid cognizers and 2. non-valid cognizers.

There are two types of valid cognizer: 1. direct valid cognizers and 2. inferential valid cognizers.

The Consequentialists define a valid cognizer differently from all the lower schools: a valid cognizer can be any mind that realizes/ is infallible with respect to its own particular object [object of the mode of apprehension].

This is unlike all the lower schools' assertions, which assert that a valid cognizer has to be a *new* incontrovertible knower.

The Consequentialists assert that a valid cognizer is not necessary *new*, it only needs to realize its object. Therefore, for them, subsequent cognizers are [direct] valid cognizers as well, whereas they are not valid cognizers for all the lower schools.

Therefore, the differences in assertions between the Consequentialists and all the lower schools with respect to valid cognizers arise from what the definition of a valid cognizer is.

According to the Consequentialists: a direct valid cognizer 1) is incontrovertible with respect to its object of the mode of apprehension, and 2) arises without directly relying on a sign.

Self-cognizing direct perceivers are not asserted, and a sense consciousness in the continuum of a sentient being is necessarily a mistaken consciousness. Mental consciousnesses and yogic direct perceivers can be either mistaken or non-mistaken.

They assert that there are three divisions of direct valid cognizers: sense, mental and yogic direct perceivers and refutes self-knowing direct perceivers.

Another way to divide direct valid cognizers is into two:

There are two types of direct valid cognizers: 1. conceptual direct valid cognizers and 2. non-conceptual direct valid cognizers.

All lower schools assert that a direct valid cognizer is necessarily free from conceptuality.

Illustrations of conceptual direct valid cognizers are, for example, the second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent and a remembering consciousness that is a factually concordant memory of blue generated through being induced by a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue.

The second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent is a conceptual direct valid cognizer, whereas the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent is an inferential valid cognizer.

Therefore, the second moment of this mind becomes a subsequent cognizer which is a conceptual direct valid cognizer.

The difference between a direct valid cognizer and an inferential valid cognizer lies in whether the mind arises by directly relying on a sign or not.

A direct valid cognizer is not generated by relying directly on a sign, whereas an inferential cognizer is generated by relying directly on a sign.

Therefore, the first moment of a mind realizing the impermanence of sound through the force of reason is an *inferential valid cognizer*. This is because, this first moment of a valid cognizer comes about by directly relying upon a sign.

However, the second moment of such a mind would be a direct valid cognizer. This is because, even though such a mind is generated in dependence on a reason, it nevertheless is *not directly* generated in dependence upon a reason.

Since the second moment of a an inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent is *not directly* generated in dependence upon a reason, therefore, it is not an inferential valid cognizer but a direct valid cognizer and is conceptual.

The second moment of an eye consciousness apprehending blue is also *not directly* generated in dependence on a sign as well

Since it is a second moment of an eye consciousness apprehending blue, it is a subsequent, non-conceptual direct valid cognizer.

Therefore, for the Consequentialists, a valid cognizer is not necessary newly incontrovertible. So long as it is incontrovertible with respect to its main object/ [object of the mode of apprehension], then it is a valid cognizer.

Due to this, for them, subsequent cognizers are necessarily [direct] valid cognizers.

What distinguishes between a direct valid cognizer and an inferential valid cognizer is that, a direct valid cognizer is not directly generated by depending on a sign whereas an inferential valid cognizer is directly generated by depending on a sign.

Therefore, the second moment of an inferential valid cognizer is not an inferential valid cognizer but a conceptual direct valid cognizer.

Therefore, for the Consequentialists, a direct perceiver is not necessary a knower that is free of conceptuality.

Q&A:

SQ: How would the direct valid cognizer, in the Autonomy Middle Way School's definition of conventional truth, which is necessarily non-mistaken, realize a conventional truth, which is necessarily a mistaken object?
According to the Sutra School, an eye consciousness apprehending blue is a non-mistaken consciousness.
As for the Sutra Autonomy Middle Way School, since they accept external object, perhaps they would also assert that the eye consciousness apprehending blue is non-mistaken. Therefore, they would probably assert that the sense consciousnesses are non-mistaken.
Perhaps your question is referring to reconciling the definition of conventional truth with respect to how a sense consciousness is non-mistaken, that these two factors seem contradictory?
The consciousness that posits blue is essentially the eye consciousness apprehending blue. When an eye consciousness apprehends blue, it realizes blue that is accompanied with dualistic appearances.
Even though such a realization is accompanied with dualistic appearances, this does not render such a consciousness to be a mistaken consciousness.
Therefore, the presence of dualistic appearance does not necessarily mean that the consciousness that possesses it is a mistaken consciousness.
SQ: Would that mean that the sense and mental [direct perceivers of a worldly being apprehending blue] is very brief? If that is the case, would it mean the worldly beings cannot even realize conventional truth?
KR: Just because an eye consciousness apprehends blue does not necessary mean that it is a consciousness that posits blue as a conventional truth.
Nevertheless, blue is a conventional truth. This is because, it is realized together with dualistic appearance by the direct valid cognizer that directly realizes it.
SQ: Would this not be merely the sense direct perceiver? By the time the worldly consciousness labels it, would it not be a valid cognizer any more? KR: Yes.
SQ: Would that mean the definitions of conventional truth that involve the valid cognizers for all the lower schools would only refer to the sense direct valid cognizer then?
KR: The valid direct perceiver / direct valid cognizer in this definition of the conventional truth, is essentially referring to the main mind that posits/ verifies/ certifies the existence on whatever phenomenon in question.
SQ: When 'it reaches' the conceptual consciousness, due to the main mind labeling [the object] in the first place, would that also render the conceptual consciousness a valid cognizer as well?
KR: There is a thought thinking 'blue' that is induced by the eye consciousness apprehending blue. However, there is no fallacy in stating that such a thought is not a valid cognizer as it is a subsequent cognizer as according to the lower schools.

The Consequentialists' assertion of valid cognizers:

The Consequentialists assert that a valid cognizer is a knower that is infallible with respect to its main object.
Unlike the lower tenets, the Consequentialists assert that a valid cognizer need not be a <i>newly</i> incontrovertible knower.
They are the same with respect to the division of valid cognizer with the lower tenets: Direct valid cognizer and Inferential valid cognizer.
A direct valid cognizer is 1) a valid cognizer (A knower which is incontrovertible [irrefutable] with respect to its object of the mode of apprehension) and 2) arises by not directly depending on a sign.
An inferential valid cognizer is 1) a valid cognizer (A knower which is incontrovertible [irrefutable] with respect to its object of the mode of apprehension) and 2) arises by directly depending on a sign.
There are three divisions of direct valid cognizer: 1) Sense 2) Mental 3) Yogic direct valid cognizer.
Self-cognizing direct perceivers are not asserted, and a sense consciousness in the continuum of a sentient being is necessarily a mistaken consciousness. Mental consciousnesses and yogic direct perceivers can be either mistaken or non-mistaken.
Why a sense consciousness in the continuum of a sentient being is necessarily mistaken: The Consequentialists assert these differently from the lower tenets: a sense consciousness in the continuum of a sentient being is necessarily mistaken.
While this is so, it is not necessary not a valid cognizer, this means, there is a common locus between a mistaken consciousness and a valid cognizer.

One of the fundamental assertions of the Consequentialists is that all phenomena necessarily do not exist by way of their own characters, whereas all lower tenets assert that if it is an existent, it necessarily exists by way of its own character.
In this school, any phenomenon that appears to the sense consciousness in the continuum of a sentient being necessarily appears to exist by way of its own character, exist from its own side.
Even though things and events appear this way to such a consciousness, in reality, phenomena do not exist by way of their own characters, from their own sides.
Due to this, for the Consequentialists, sense consciousnesses in the continuum of sentient beings are necessarily mistaken.
Why mental consciousnesses in the continua of sentient beings other than the wisdom directly realizing emptiness are mistaken: With the exception of the wisdom directly realizing emptiness, all other consciousnesses in the continua of sentient beings are necessarily mistaken.
This is because, whatever that appears to these consciousnesses, always appears as truly existent, exist by way of its own character, exist from its own side.
Based on that, “mental consciousnesses and yogic direct perceivers can be either mistaken or non-mistaken.”
An illustration [of a mistaken mental consciousness] would be: a clairvoyant knowing another's mind. It is a mental consciousness but not a wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, therefore, it is mistaken.
Illustration of a non-mistaken mental direct perceiver: an uninterrupted path of the Mahayana path of seeing. It is a wisdom directly realizing emptiness in the continuum of a sentient being which is a mental direct perceiver that is non-mistaken.
The lower tenets assert that mental direct perceivers are necessarily non-conceptual, whereas the Consequentialists assert that mental direct perceivers can be conceptual consciousnesses.
Illustration of a conceptual [mistaken] mental direct perceiver: a thought remembering blue that is induced by an eye consciousness apprehending blue. This is a conceptual subsequent mental direct valid cognizer.
Therefore, according to the Consequentialists, a mental direct perceiver is not necessarily non-conceptual: there are mental direct perceivers which are conceptual consciousnesses.
A yogic direct perceiver is generated in dependence upon its uncommon empowering condition, a concentration which is the union of calm abiding and special insight. This is the same assertion as the lower tenets.
With this as the uncommon empowering condition, the yogic direct perceiver can be mistaken or non-mistaken, depending on the object of observation.
Illustrations of mistaken and non-mistaken yogic direct perceivers:
The Consequentialists assert that these three are yogic direct perceivers: 1) Yogic direct perceiver realizing subtle impermanence – necessarily mistaken consciousness 2) Yogic direct perceiver realizing coarse selflessness – necessarily mistaken consciousness 3) Yogic direct perceiver realizing subtle selflessness – necessarily non-mistaken consciousness
Yogic direct perceivers can either be conceptual or non-conceptual.
There are two types of direct valid cognizers: 1. conceptual direct valid cognizers and 2. non-conceptual direct valid cognizers. Illustrations of conceptual direct valid cognizers are, for example, the second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent and a remembering consciousness that is a factually concordant memory of blue generated through being induced by a sense direct perceiver apprehending blue.
The illustrations above are both direct valid cognizer and conceptual consciousnesses.
An illustration of a non-conceptual direct valid cognizer is, for example, a sense direct perceiver apprehending a form. If it is a direct valid cognizer it is not necessarily a perceptible object because if it is a yogic direct perceiver it is necessarily not a perceptible object. This is so because perceptible object and manifest object are equivalent.
Why perceptible objects and manifest objects are mutually inclusive: In this school, these two are mutually inclusive. These are objects that one can merely realize/ experience directly without the need to depend on a reason.
For example, sound is a perceptible object. The moment sound hits the ear consciousness, it is heard by this consciousness. Such a consciousness is not generated directly by thinking “Is this sound?” but merely directly through experience.
Similarly, when the tongue consciousness apprehends something sweet or sour, it is perceived immediately without the need to posit a reason for such a consciousness to be generated. Therefore, such objects are perceptible or manifest objects.
What are hidden objects: Whereas for impermanent sound, the emptiness of inherent existence or the emptiness of establishment by way of its own character, these can only be realized initially through the force of reasons. Therefore, such objects are hidden objects.

Why yogic direct perceivers are necessarily not manifest objects: There can be direct valid cognizers that are not perceptible objects. For example, a yogic direct perceiver is necessarily not a perceptible object.

This is because, a yogic direct perceiver is necessarily a hidden object.

If it is a subsequent cognizer it is necessarily a direct valid cognizer.

There are four types of inferential cognizers:

1. inferential cognizers through the power of the fact,
2. inferential cognizers through renown,
3. inferential cognizers through an example, and
4. inferential cognizers through belief.

This assertion is mostly very similar to the divisions of inferential cognizers as explained in *Lorig*, Inferential cognizers through the power of: 1) Fact 2) Renown 3) Belief.

If it is a valid cognizer, it is not necessarily non-mistaken with respect to its determined object because an inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent is a consciousness that is mistaken with respect to impermanent sound.

An inferential cognizer realizing sound to be impermanent is: 1) an inferential cognizer 2) a valid cognizer 3) a conceptual consciousness 4) a mistaken consciousness with respect to its determined object/ object of engagement.

If it is a consciousness, it necessarily realizes its object of comprehension because the generic image of the horns of a rabbit is the object of comprehension of a conception apprehending the horns of a rabbit, and the generic image of permanent sound is the object of comprehension of a conception apprehending sound to be permanent.

The lower tenets assert that all conceptual consciousnesses are necessarily mistaken. This is because, they assert that such consciousnesses are mistaken with respect to the appearing object, which is a meaning generality.

However, the Consequentialists assert that the thought that realizes a meaning generality [a conceptual consciousness] is not mistaken with respect to its mental image.

If it is a consciousness, it necessarily realizes its object of comprehension. This is because, whatever consciousness in question, it is getting at an object [realizes its object], whether correctly or incorrectly.

For example, a dream consciousness having an appearance of a dream elephant. Even though such a consciousness is a mistaken consciousness, it nevertheless realizes the dream elephant that is appearing as an elephant.

The Consequentialists assert that, for such a dream consciousness having such an appearance of an elephant, the sign showing that this dream consciousness does realize its object, a dream elephant appearing as an elephant, is that one can: **2) remember** what appeared in a dream. This is because, one **1) noticed** the varied appearances [earlier in the dream.]

The consciousness that realized those appearances is the dream consciousness.

As for the thought apprehending permanent sound, it realizes the meaning generality [of sound.]

In essence, the Consequentialists' way of asserting consciousness/ object possessors are in many ways different from the lower tenets.

KQ: Is an inferential cognizer realizing impermanent sound a wrong consciousness? It follows that it is a wrong consciousness because it erroneously engages in its mode of apprehension.

How the textbook of *Sera Jhe College*, this root text of *Jetsunba*, asserts a coarse selflessness of phenomena:

6 Way of asserting selflessness

The person being empty of being self-sufficient substantially existent is asserted to be a coarse selflessness of persons and the person being empty of true existence is asserted to be the subtle selflessness of persons.

A gross object composed of partless particles and the valid cognizer apprehending it being empty of being different substances is posited as a coarse selflessness of phenomena and the aggregates – the basis of designation – being empty of true existence is posited as the subtle selflessness of phenomena.

The Consequentialists assert external objects. They also assert that the external object and the consciousnesses apprehending them are different substances.

Therefore, they do not assert the coarse selflessness of phenomena that is the emptiness of subject and object being different substances.

In this text, they posit “*A gross object composed of partless particles and the valid cognizer apprehending it being empty of being different substances is posited as a coarse selflessness of phenomena.*”

However, the Consequentialists do not assert the *coarse selflessness of phenomena* to be the *emptiness of subject and object as different substances*. This is because, they assert external objects and do not refute them.

Therefore, form and the consciousness apprehending it [do exist as] different substances.
In other monastic textbooks of the <i>Gelug</i> tradition, it is unsure whether these textbooks assert that the Consequentialists posit a coarse selflessness of phenomena.
However, according to the monastic textbooks of <i>Sera Jhe College</i> , this root text of <i>Jetsunba</i> , the coarse selflessness of phenomena is posited.

A classic example to show how phenomena exist as mere imputation by thought:

The two [subtle] selflessnesses are differentiated by way of the basis of emptiness and not by way of the object of negation because the refutation of the object of negation – true existence - upon the basis of a person is the subtle selflessness of persons, and the refutation of the object of negation - true existence – upon the basis of the aggregates and so forth is the subtle selflessness of phenomena.

The two [subtle] conceptions of self are differentiated by way of the observed object and not by way of the mode of apprehension because observing the basis - the person – and apprehending it to be truly existent is posited as the subtle conception of a self of persons, and observing the basis of imputation – the aggregates and so forth – and apprehending it to be truly existent is posited as the subtle conception of a self of phenomena.

The Consequentialists assert that all phenomena are merely imputed by thought. The word <i>merely</i> negates/ eliminates establishment by way of its own character/ existence from its own side.
This is very difficult to understand: anything that exists, exists as merely imputed by thought.
They use the classic example of mistaken a coil of rope to be a snake:
Under certain conditions, where the surroundings are not bright yet not completely dark, where there is a distant between oneself and a coil of rope, one may mistaken that coil of rope as a snake.
When the conditions are ripe, one sees a coil of rope as a snake: there is an appearance of snake right there from the side of the rope. Not only is there an appearance, one also believes/ assents to that appearance. Based on that, one may develop fear.
Although the coil of rope is appearing as a snake, and one believes in that appearance, thinking “There’s a real snake there and I am frightened,” however, from the side of the rope, one would not be able to find a snake on the rope.
No matter how one searches, from one end of the rope to the other, one would not be able to find anything about the rope that is the snake: there is no snake on the rope.
Therefore, the coil of rope appearing as a snake is merely an imputation by mind, thinking, “There is a snake there.” This is all there is, there is no snake right there on the rope.
Nevertheless, one gets afraid and does not realize that it is one's mind that has imputed that coil of rope to be a snake.
One does not realize that it is one's own mind that has imputed snake on the rope. In reality, there is no snake on the rope.
Instinctively, one's mind believes that there is a snake on the rope without realizing that it is imputed by thought.
When one searches for the snake on the rope, one would not be able to find the snake: from one end to the other, one would not be able to point to any part of the rope that is a snake.
Yet, at the same time, there cannot be a snake apart from that coil of rope: there is not a snake which is something other than that coil of rope. One would not be able to find a snake that is separate from the coil of rope.
Therefore, due to this, it is possible realize that the snake is merely imputed by one's mind [and nothing else.]
This is because, when one gets closer to the rope, one would realize that there is no snake there on the rope, that the apprehension of a snake on the coil of rope is one's own mistaken conception.
When one sees the coil of rope for what it is, one realizes that one was mistaken all the while, that the [idea of] snake is something which is made up/ imputed by one's own mind.
However, earlier on, one did not realize that one was mistaken, that the snake was merely imputed by one's own mind.
The Consequentialists use this [classic] example to explain how the “I” exists: that which is merely imputed in dependence upon the aggregates which are the bases of designation. What the “I” is, is none other than this.
Although, in reality, this is how the “I” exists, none other than that which is merely imputed in dependence upon the aggregates, nevertheless, when the “I” appears back to one's mind, it appears to exist from the side of the aggregates.
One also believes that there is an “I” from within the aggregates, the “I” <i>is</i> the aggregates, coming from the side of the aggregates and not merely imputed by thought.
The “I” appears to exist right there from the side of the aggregates, within the aggregates, somewhere inside the aggregates.
This is how the “I” appears to exist. However, this is not how it exists in reality.

This is because, if the “I” really existed from the side of the aggregates, then when one looks for it within the aggregates individually, one should be able to find/ indicate where the “I” is. However, such an “I” is not findable upon analysis.
When one searches for the self / I / person amongst the aggregates individually, which is the basis of designation for the “I”, one would not be able to point out/ find the “I”. Neither is the collection of the aggregates the “I” as well.
Just as one would not be able to find the snake on the coil of rope, likewise, one would not be able to find the person on the aggregates, which is the basis of designation.
The “I” is not the aggregates, it cannot be found on the aggregates, nevertheless, there is also not an “I” that is separate from/ not the aggregates.
When one eliminates the aggregates one by one, one would also not be able to find an “I” apart from the aggregates as well.
Just as one would not be able to find the snake on the coil of rope, likewise, one would also not be able to find a snake that is separate from the coil of rope as well.
In the same way, as one would not be able to find the person on/ amongst the aggregates, one would also not be able to find the person that is separate/ apart/ different from the aggregates.
Therefore, what the “I” is, is none other than that which is imputed in dependence upon the aggregates.
Like the self / I / person, the aggregates are also merely imputed like everything else. Everything that exists is merely imputed by thought.
The Consequentialists assert that everything that exists, is necessarily imputed by thought. There is nothing that can exist without being merely imputed by thought.
Anything that is said to exist but yet is not merely imputed by thought therefore becomes the object of negation.
For the Consequentialists, this is what is meant by the word 'self', which is an object of negation.
This “self” is divided into the <i>self of person</i> and the <i>self of phenomena</i> .
If there is a person that can exist without being merely imputed by mind and exists from its own side, then this would be the self of person.
If there is any phenomena other than the person that can exist without being merely imputed by mind and exist from their own sides, then these would be the self of phenomena.
The absence/ non-existence/ emptiness of the person existing from its own side is the selflessness of person.
The absence/ non-existence/ emptiness of phenomena other than person existing from their own sides is the selflessness of phenomena.
How the objects of negation are not differentiated: The Consequentialists assert that there is no difference in the object of negation with respect to the two selflessnesses, be it the selflessness of person or the selflessness of phenomena.
The object of negation is the same: true existence/ inherent existence.
The non-existence of the object of negation in relation to a person is the selflessness of person; the non-existence of the object of negation in relation to a phenomenon [other than person] is the selflessness of phenomena.

SQ: For the Consequentialists, is there a common locus between a mental direct perceiver and yogic direct perceiver?

KR: The uninterrupted path of the Mahayana path.

SQ: The assertion in the phrase “*A gross object composed of partless particles and the valid cognizer apprehending it being empty of being different substances*” sounded like object and subject are the same entity like the assertion of the Mind Only School. How does that reconcile that the Consequentialists asserting external objects and the subject and object are different substances?

KR: A gross object made up of partless particles does not exist. The Consequentialists do not assert partless particles. If partless particles do not exist, then one cannot posit a gross object that is made up of partless particles. Therefore, a gross object that is composed of partless particles do not exist. Since that is the case, then there cannot be any valid cognizer that apprehends it. Since that is the case, the object and the subject apprehending it cannot be the same substances. Due to their respective status, they are one substance. Since that is the case, they are empty of being different substances.

SR: With respect to Khenrinpoche's questions in the previous lesson - The inferential valid cognizer realizes the impermanence of sound is not a wrong consciousness but a mistaken consciousness. This is because, the impermanence of sound appears to be inherently existent to such an inferential cognizer, therefore, it is mistaken. However, the inferential cognizer does realize the impermanence of sound, therefore it is not a wrong consciousness.

Gaining an understanding of the object of negation of the Consequent Middle Way School:

With respect to the object of negation of the Consequent Middle Way School, even though there are many examples like illusions, mirage and so forth, the analogy of <i>mistaking the coil of rope to be a snake</i> is perhaps the best illustration to show how phenomena are merely imputed by thought.
In the example of an illusory elephant, which is something that is conjured by a magician, one may see an illusory elephant due to the spells used.
However, when one looks/ searches for a fully qualified elephant on/ amongst that <i>basis of appearance</i> appearing as an elephant, one would not be able to find/ point to a real elephant there.
Such analogies, like the dream elephant and mistaking a coil of rope as snake, can be applied to the self / I / person: when one looks for the self / I / person on the aggregates/ basis of designation, one would not be able to point to/ find the "I".
Even though the "I" appears to be oneness/ mixed with/ amongst the aggregates, something findable there, however, when one looks for such an "I", one would not be able to find it.
The most important assertion of the Consequent Middle Way School is that, all phenomena/ anything that exists, exists as merely imputed by thought, which includes the self / I / person.
The way to understand how all phenomena exist as merely imputed by thought is to use these analogies.
It is important to understand what it means by <i>merely imputed by thought</i> . Gaining an understanding of this is crucial.
For example, the self / I / person is that which is merely imputed in dependence upon the aggregates, the basis of designation.
For us, who do not have any understanding of the ultimate nature of reality/ emptiness of phenomena, whatever thought about, whatever phenomena that appear to the mind, all appear as truly existent/ inherently existent/ exist from its own side.
The most difficult challenge is to distinguish between <i>existence</i> and <i>inherent existence</i> . This is because, whatever appears to one, appears as inherently existent. One believes this is how things exist: if it exists, it is necessarily inherently existent.

Looking for the "I" amongst the aggregates:

Nagajuna said in his <i>Precious Garlands</i> that, one should look for the "I" on the basis of designation, the aggregates/ body and mind. One should check to see if the "I" is amongst the aggregates:
As one's [body] is made up of the four elements, then is the self / I / person the earth, water, fire, wind; or is it the consciousness? One should check and investigate if the self / I / person is any of these or the collection of all these.
When one thinks of one's self / I / person, this naturally appears to exist from its own side, from the side of the aggregates, that there is an "I" somewhere there.
When one does not investigate, one may think that the "I" is probably somewhere there either on the body or mind or a collection of them. This is how the "I" appears, not only that, one also believes that the "I" <i>is</i> like that.
Therefore, the main question is: although the "I" appears in such a way, does it exist in the way it appears? Although it appears in such a way, would one be able to find the "I" amongst its basis of designation?
Nagajuna therefore encourages one to search for such an "I", whether it is the body, mind and so forth.
The conclusion is, when one looks for it, one would not be able to point to such an "I", whether it is on the body or mind, one would not be able to point to anything that one can say, "This <i>is</i> the self / I / person."
Although the "I" appears to exist inherently/ exist from its own side/ findable amongst its basis of designation/ findable amongst its aggregates/ body and mind, however, when one looks for it, one would not be able to find such an "I".
The unfindability of such an inherently existent "I" upon searching, shows that the "I" does not exist inherently.
What one finds eventually, is the emptiness of the inherently existent "I".
When one looks for the self / I / person amongst the basis of designation, eliminating them one by one, one would still not be able to point to/ find an "I".
This naturally leads to the question: "Does that mean that the "I" does not exist?"
Even though when one is eventually unable to find the "I" in analysis, this however, does not mean that the "I" is non-existent. This would be an incorrect conclusion as the "I" obviously exists from one's own experience.

When the “I” is not found, it is not the same as finding the non-existence of the “I”:

It is clear and definite that there is a self / I / person that wishes to be happy and does not wish to suffer.
Although when one looks for the self / I / person amongst its basis of designation, the body and mind, one would eventually not be able to find the self / I / person, however, this does not mean that one has found the non-existence of the self / I / person.
At the end of the search, what one does not find is the “I”, however, this is different from finding the non-existence of the “I”.
What one has not found is the “I”, however, this does not mean that one has discovered that the “I” essentially does not exist.
It is clearly evident that there is a self / I / person that exists that does not want to suffer and wishes to be happy. This is established through common sense/ experience. It is therefore foolish to assert that the self / I / person does not exist.

Establishing how the “I” exists:

However, the question remains: Since the self / I / person exists, then how does it exist?
Since the self / I / person is neither the body, mind nor its collection, is not found on its basis of designation, and yet it exists, therefore, in the final analysis, what the self / I / person is, is none other than that which is merely imputed/ posited by mind.
There is nothing more to the [existence of the] “I” other than it being merely imputed by thought.
This is how the “I” exists, as merely this and nothing more. It exists as merely imputed in dependence upon the aggregates, which are its basis of designation.
Therefore, the “I” does not exist inherently, it exists as that which is merely imputed in dependence upon the aggregates.
Therefore, the “I” is merely imputed by thought.
The Consequent Middle Way School asserts that, when one is reflecting on the emptiness of inherent existence, one should do so on the basis of the “I” first rather than reflect on the emptiness of inherent existence of phenomena other than the “I”.
This is because, it is said that it is easier to gain an initial comprehension of the emptiness of inherently existence if one reflects on the basis of the “I”.

Why it is difficult to identify the object of negation, the inherently existent “I”:

However, this does not mean that it will be easy as it is extremely difficult to understand the emptiness of inherent existence.
This is because, to realize emptiness, one needs to correctly identify in experience the exact target/ object of negation.
In relation to the “I”, this will be the inherently existent “I”. However, to be able to identify this will be so difficult.
One cannot differentiate between the inherently existent “I”, which does not exist at all, from the conventionally existent “I”, which does exist. This is completely mixed up, which makes it very difficult to identify the target correctly in experience.
Therefore, the greatest difficulty is to differentiate between <i>existence</i> and <i>inherent existence</i> . This is because, one thinks that anything that exists, necessarily exist inherently. This is why it is so difficult to differentiate between the two.
Since it is so difficult, therefore, all the lower tenets and their founding masters believe and assert that, if phenomena exist, it necessarily exist inherently, otherwise, they cannot exist.
Due to the great difficulty in distinguishing between nominal existence and inherent existence, all the lower tenets assert that phenomena exist inherently/ can be found. One would definitely be able to point to something that is the object.

How phenomena can only exist as merely imputed by thought:

For most people, entertaining the idea that phenomena are merely imputed by the mind would mean that one can make up anything in the mind. This would be most illogical to them as there must be something inherently there from their own sides.
Therefore, all the lower tenets assert that, if it exists, it is necessarily inherently existent.
The Great Exposition School and Sutra School assert external objects, which are findable: when one looks for it, one will be able to indicate at something that is the external object.
The Mind Only School does not assert external objects because, when one searches for the external object, one would not be able to find it. Since that is the case, they refute external objects.
Whether it is the Hinayana schools' assertion of external objects or whether it is the Mind Only School's refutation of external objects, essentially, their assertions or refutation of external objects depend essentially on whether it can be found or not.
The Consequent Middle Way School assert external objects as well. However, it is unlike the Hinayana schools' assertions.
They do not assert external object because these are findable. This is because, everything that exists, can only exist by being merely imputed by mind, therefore, they are not findable upon analysis.

<p>However, internal objects and external objects, apprehender and apprehended, subjects and objects, due to them existing conventionally, they are asserted to exist. Therefore, they assert external objects to be conventionally existent.</p>
<p>The most difficult thing about the Consequent Middle Way School's view is to understand how things can exist as something that is merely imputed by thought.</p>
<p>This is extremely complicated because, from one view, anything that exists is merely imputed by mind/ thought, but from another view, this does not mean that everything that is merely imputed by thought do exist.</p>
<p>Personal example to show how a person exists as merely labeled by mind: Khenrinpoche: Perhaps I can give a personal account, I have a story about my key-chain.</p>
<p>This key-chain was given to me six, seven years ago. The first time when I saw it, I thought the 'G' on the key-chain meant '<i>Geshe</i>', for <i>Geshe Chonyi</i>. That was what I thought it meant, and I held onto that believe for five, six years.</p>
<p>So, it was valid in my mind for that long. However, in reality, that was not the case. I found that out when a nine, ten year old child saw my key-chain and was quite shocked that I had one like that and went to tell his mother.</p>
<p>I was still in the dark as to why he was shocked, and the reason was that the 'G' actually meant 'Gucci'.</p>
<p>The mother then told me that it was a <i>real</i> Gucci key-chain. It was then that I had a valid cognizer of real Gucci key-chain!</p>
<p>The first idea was therefore not valid, something merely labeled by my mind, 'Geshe Chonyi'. Even though it is true in my mind, but, whoever knows this brand does not see that.</p>
<p>Therefore, at the end of the day, this is Gucci key-chain. How this comes about is by being labeled by [its creator].</p>
<p>Therefore, even though one can label and believe in that, but in reality it is not the case, it is merely [valid] for oneself.</p>
<p>When I found out about its actual [name/ meaning], it nevertheless also exists as merely labeled by mind when someone labels it and it becomes valid. So, it is quite complicated.</p>
<p>I also mentioned this story before that happened at the Botanical Gardens:</p>
<p>When one says that I am a monk, this is also merely labeled as this does not exist from [the side of my] robes.</p>
<p>It is only when everyone is able to tell that I am a monk when they see me wearing the robes would that make [monk] exists from its own side. In reality, [monk] does not exist from its own side.</p>
<p>Similarly, my name, 'Geshe Chonyi' does not exist from its own side. When you put in another name 'Khenrinpoche', this also does not exist from its own side.</p>
<p>This is very clear from the episode at the Botanical Gardens, if the person did not see me and realized that I was a monk, then to realize the label <i>Geshe</i> would be impossible.</p>
<p>Therefore, whatever object in question, that phenomenon does not exist from the side of the basis of designation. It only exists as merely imputed in dependence upon its basis of designation.</p>
<p>In the final analysis, when one reflects on the way phenomena exist, it can only exist as that which is merely imputed in dependence upon its basis of designation. This is the most difficult [nature of existence] to understand.</p>
<p>Just like what Nagajuna said in his <i>Precious Garlands</i>: “The person is not the earth, nor water, nor fire, nor wind that make up the body; the person is also not consciousness.”</p>
<p>This does not mean that the person does not exist, it is essentially the collection of the elements and consciousness [which are the bases upon which] the person is merely imputed in independence upon these collections.</p>
<p>Since the person is none other than that which is imputed in dependence upon its basis of designation, therefore, the person does not exist inherently, does not exist from its own side.</p>
<p>The conclusion is that, the person is that which is merely imputed in dependence upon the aggregates, the body and mind.</p>

How the body and mind also do not exist inherently:

<p>That said, someone may think: “Even though the person may be merely imputed in dependence upon the body and mind, however, the body and mind may exist inherently.”</p>
<p>This is also not the case as even the aggregates, the body and mind, do not exist from their own sides, do not exist inherently.</p>
<p>For example, imagine there are two people walking towards one another and there is a person standing in between them.</p>
<p>From the perspective of the person in the middle, when he looks at the person on his right, what he sees is that there is a person going towards the other person. When he looks to his left, there is a another person coming.</p>
<p>The fact of the person going and a person coming is only posited in dependence upon the perspective of the middle person.</p>
<p>The factor of coming and going is merely posited in dependence upon the existence of the two persons moving. One cannot posit the coming and going without depending on the two persons moving.</p>

There is also the example given in the text about the 'mountain on this side and the mountain on the other side'.
Whether it is a mountain of this side or it is a mountain of the other side really depends on one's perspective:
If one is standing on the mountain of this side and looking at the mountain of the other side, one then labels it to be the mountain of the other side.
However, if one is standing there, then one would label this mountain here 'the mountain of the other side'.
Therefore, whether it is a 'mountain of this side' or it is a 'mountain of the other side' is actually relative.
This clearly shows that there is no such thing as 'the mountain of the other side' that exists independently from its own side.
This is because, if there was a real 'mountain of the other side' existing from its own side as 'the mountain of the other side', then it will always be 'a mountain of the other side' and can never be 'a mountain of this side'.
This is obviously not the case as it becomes 'a mountain of this side' when one stands on the other mountain.
Therefore, the factor of it existing as 'a mountain of the other side' is relative, imputed and dependent on other factors.
Since that is the case, its existence as a mountain of the other side is changeable.

Developing faith that positive changes can arise because phenomena are empty of true existence:

According to the Middle Way School, the main reason all sentient beings, especially oneself, can become Buddhas, is because one's mind is not truly existent. Since one's mind is not truly existent, therefore, it can change.
This is very different from the view of the Mind Only School, which assert that everything that exists is in the nature of the mind. Everything that exists arises due to the awakening of a predisposition that produces the appearance of an object.
The Middle Way School refutes this and assert that everything that exists, including the mind, exists as dependently originated. Due to this, all phenomena, including the mind, do not exist truly, do not exist inherently.
Since all phenomena do not exist inherently, including the mind, when causes and conditions gather, change can be effected.
Arising from emptiness, there is the [appearance] of the myriad variety of phenomena. Therefore, this is the meaning for the expression: <i>“All phenomena are in the nature/ display/ sport of emptiness.”</i>
All phenomena are empty of existing inherently because all phenomena are dependently arisen. Since all phenomena are dependently arisen, when causes and conditions gather, there are the arising and disintegration of phenomena.
Since phenomena are dependently arisen, phenomena cannot be inherently existent.
The Consequent Middle Way School asserts: “Since all phenomena are dependently arisen, they are not inherently existent.”

Correctly identifying the object of negation, the inherently existent “I”:

When one gets emotionally upset because others point out one's faults/ criticizes/ belittles one, or when one feels very puffed up and arrogant, it is possible to get a glimpse of this 'I' that appears to exist from its own side/ exist inherently.
One can discover that the 'I' that is upset, the 'I' that is hurt seems so real that one can almost briefly feel that it is in there amongst its basis of designation.
When one is being put down, there is this feeling that the 'I' feels so down and depressed. When one is praised, there is this very elevated sense of 'I' that feels so 'high'.
All these different experiences of how the 'I' appears to be inherently existent from its own side <i>is</i> the object of negation, the target that needs to be destroyed.
The object of negation, the target which one attempts to realize to be empty, that does not exist, <i>is</i> this feeling of the false sense of the 'I', be it a depressed or an elevated sense of 'I' that is felt to be somewhere in there that is almost 'touchable'.
This is the object of negation that needs to be destroyed.
When one has had some experiences in correctly identifying this false sense of 'I' that does not exist but nevertheless appears to be so real as either elevated or depressed, at those times when one is 'emotionally charged', one can think about what Nagajuna said and look for it: Where is this 'I'? Is it the body, is it the mind?
When one has a good understanding and does it correctly, one [will find] that the strong grasping, the tightness [in the heart] will loosen. One will feel the relief as one begins to understand that, “It actually does not exist!”
Whether one calls it the object of negation, the target or whatever label, the essence is this false sense of 'I' that appears so real and findable amongst the aggregates.
The source of all of one's problems/ unhappiness, comes from either feeling too full of oneself or depressed, which arises from the false sense of 'I'.

The conceptions of self of person and self of phenomena are that which hinder liberation:

7A Objects of abandonment

The coarse and subtle conceptions of a self together with their seeds and the attachment and so forth that arise due to the force of those [conceptions] together with their seeds are afflictive obscurations. They are posited as obscurations that mainly prevent the attainment of liberation.

The conception of a coarse self of person is the conception of a self-sufficient, substantially existent person.

The conception of a subtle self of person is the conception of truly existent person.

1) These two conceptions together with their seeds placed on the mind by these conceptions, as well as the afflictions arising from those conceptions and seeds are all posited to be afflictive obscurations.

The afflictive obscurations function to hinder/ prevent the attainment of liberation from cyclic existence.

According to this school, to achieve liberation, one necessarily needs to abandon all these afflictive obscurations.

However, the conception of a truly existent person is not the only afflictive obscuration.

2) The conception of the aggregates and all other phenomena other than the persons as truly existent, the conception of a self of phenomena, is also an afflictive obscuration.

Therefore, these two conceptions, the conception of the self of person and the conception of the self of phenomena, are all afflictive obscurations. As mentioned previously, these two conceptions are not differentiated by its object of negation.

Since these two conceptions are afflictive obscurations, they have to be abandoned in order to achieve liberation.

Therefore, to achieve liberation, one necessarily needs to directly realize the selflessness of persons and the selflessness of phenomena.

This assertion of the Consequent Middle Way School is very different from the assertions of the lower schools, which assert that to achieve liberation, one merely needs to realize the selflessness of persons and not the selflessness of phenomena

The Consequent Middle Way School refutes this and asserts that, to achieve liberation, one necessarily needs to realize these two selflessnesses, the selflessnesses of persons and phenomena.

What is the root of cyclic existence/ ignorance:

The difference in positions between the Consequent Middle Way School and the rest with respect to the afflictive obscurations is mainly due to the assertion of the root of cyclic existence:

All the lower schools assert that the root of cyclic existence/ ignorance to be the conception of a self of person. Due to this, they assert that one merely needs to abandon this conception to achieve liberation.

For these tenets, all one needs to do is to directly realize the emptiness of the self of person. With that, one would eventually be able to achieve liberation.

Even though the Consequent Middle Way School also assert that ignorance is the root of cyclic existence, but they assert that ignorance is not merely the conception of a self of person.

Even though the conception of a self of person is ignorance and also the root of cyclic existence, but this conception arises on the basis of the conception of a self of phenomena, specifically, conceiving the aggregates, the body and mind to be inherently existent.

Therefore, for this school, ignorance is posited to be the conception of a *self*, which [includes] both the self of person and the self of phenomena.

Therefore, to achieve liberation, one necessarily needs to realize directly the selflessness of persons and phenomena before one can totally abandon ignorance.

Therefore, the assertion that one necessarily needs to abandon the conception of the self of phenomena to achieve liberation is a unique feature of the Consequent Middle Way School.

The imprints of the conception of true existence are that which hinder omniscience:

The latencies of the conception of true existence and all factors of mistaken dualistic appearance that arise due to the force of those [latencies] are obscurations to omniscience. They are posited as obscurations that mainly prevent the attainment of omniscience.

If both the conceptions of a self of person and phenomena are posited to be afflictive obscurations, then the obscurations to omniscience are posited as the *latencies/ imprints/ predispositions placed on the mind by the conceptions of true existence*.

Above these, all the mistaken dualistic appearances that arise due to the force of these latencies are also posited to be the obscurations to omniscience. These mainly prevent the attainment of full enlightenment.

Therefore, to achieve omniscience, one necessarily needs to abandon the obscurations to omniscience.
Hearers and Solitary Realizers do not abandon the obscurations to omniscience, neither are they capable of doing so.
Even in the Mahayana path, the abandonment of obscurations to omniscience do not begin until the eighth Bodhisattva ground is achieved. Here, the afflictive obscurations are abandoned once the eighth Bodhisattva ground/ <i>bumi</i> is achieved.
It is only on this ground that the abandonment of obscurations to omniscience starts.

Amongst the three vehicles, the objects of meditation are the same whereas the objects of abandonment are different:

7B Actual presentation of the grounds and paths
 There is no difference in terms of superiority among the views that are the objects of meditation of the persons of all three vehicles because all three are similar in taking the subtle selflessness of persons and the subtle selflessness of phenomena as their main objects of meditation.

Although the persons of all three vehicles do not have different objects of meditation, but they do differ with respect to their main objects of abandonment:

There are differences with respect to their main objects of abandonment because hearers and solitary realizers take the two conceptions of a self together with their seeds as their main objects of abandonment, whereas bodhisattvas take the latencies of those [conceptions] as their main objects of abandonment.

There are differences between the Hinayana path and Mahayana path with respect to their main objects of abandonment.

A nirvana without remainder is achieved first before achieving the nirvana with remainder:

The suchness that is qualified by the abandonment of the two conceptions of a self together with their seeds in the continuum of a hearer or solitary realizer foe destroyer in meditative equipoise is a nirvana without remainder, whereas such a suchness in the continuum of a hearer or solitary realizer foe destroyer in post-equipoise is a nirvana with remainder.

The nirvana in the continuum of Hearer and Solitary Realizer arhats is essentially the factor of abandonment of the afflictive obscurations, which is the mind's emptiness of true existence.

This suchness of the mind in the continuum of these arhats is posited to be the nirvana beyond sorrow/ sorrowless state of nirvana.

With respect to the nirvana with remainder and nirvana without remainder, this school assert that one achieves the nirvana without remainder first before one achieves the nirvana with remainder.

Nirvana without remainder is the *factor of abandonment of the afflictive obscuration in the continuum of a Superior in meditative equipoise*.

In essence, when the Hearer or Solitary Realizer foe destroyer is in meditative equipoise directly perceiving emptiness, what that attainment is, is the complete/ thorough abandonment of the afflictive obscurations. This state of abandonment while in meditative equipoise directly focusing on emptiness is the nirvana without remainder.

It is called a nirvana without remainder because, when the arhat is in meditative equipoise directly perceiving/ realizing emptiness, all the dualistic appearances have completely subsided.

Since no dualistic appearances remain, therefore it is called a nirvana without remainder [of dualistic appearances].

When this foe destroyer rises from meditative equipoise and enters post meditative equipoise, dualistic appearances re-appear, including the appearances of truly existent phenomena.

Even though the arhat has abandoned all afflictive obscurations and achieved the state of nirvana, but in post meditative equipoise, all the mistaken dualistic appearances re-appear.

Therefore, while in post meditative equipoise, such an arhat is in a state of nirvana with remainder [of dualistic appearances].

For those of the Great Vehicle lineage who are definite in that lineage from the very beginning, the [complete] abandonment of the afflictive obscurations occurs simultaneously with the attainment of the eighth ground, and the [complete] abandonment of the obscurations to knowledge occurs simultaneously with the actualizing of the four bodies.